

Femme Fatales

Summer

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KILLER BODY, CYNTHIA ROTHROCK

Rothrock, the
sensual side
of the world's
most popular
action heroine.

MORTAL KOMBAT'S
BRIDGETTE WILSON
ON SONYA BLADE

DIANE LANE ON
"JUDGE DREDD"

LARA PARKER

LINNEA QUIGLEY

Volume 4 Number 1





Lolita McCusker's recurrent genre roles (see page 6) qualify her as the Fantasy Cinema's blistering "Witch widow." Also visible as BAYWATCH, McCusker has posed for her own Leading Images leading card set (page 8) and will serve as "Censor woman" for the company's price guide.

Femme Fatales

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The Luscious Ladies of Horror, Fantasy & Science Fiction

SUMMER 1995

Our world is opening its tired eyes, the slumber of the winter season has withdrawn to a fresh renewal. *Femme Fatales* is experiencing its own season of renaissance. While certainly not underestimating the work of FF's stalwart male writers (God bless Dan Soggero, Michael Becker, Bruce G. Hallenbeck, Alan Jones—stick with us, guys), this magazine is swinging out a victory mode; you'll often be examining the film industry through the eyes of its female thespians. *Brinke Stevens*, who has been a FF anchor since our very first issue, tackled the "Lesbian Vampire" topic with her customary conviction. *Tina Deserei Berg* stylistically eplures sprle, insight & humor to her work (as a demonstration of the latter, sample her chronicle of the *American Film Market*, page 62). Abandoning the eclectic "screamer" handle, *Linnea Quigley* is movin' on up; recently photographed for "Ten West," a writer's periodical, *Linnea's* profile of *Stella Stevens*, (scheduled for next issue) earned accolades from no less than *Mrs. Stevens*, herself, who was impressed with the "up-close and personalized treatment." And unrestrained *Julie Swan*—sweetly "in your face," the penultimate headline—will also be a recurrent writer offering candid chronicles of her behind-the-scenes escapades. Finally, there's yours truly, actress and roving reporter, who'll debut next time around with interviews.

Assesses moonlighting as writers. Revolutionary? I wish. But another scribe, *Virginia Woolf*—who, generations ago, was a modernist stuck in a provincial universe—insisted, "There will be female Shakespeares in the future." Remember that Shakespeare was a celebrated actor and author. I'm confident that *Mezmazeira Stevens*, *Berg*, *Quigley*, *Swan* and myself will live up to the prophecy. You be the judge.

Well, FF will introduce an interactive link with the readers and addressees. I was supposed to discuss this concept with my editor, but he's enjoying sanctuary at Rick and Morona's. Next time, OK?
Catherine Conson



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LETTERS

FEMMES AND FLESH

One quality we admire the most about *FF* is the inherent boldness of the photos that are shot for your magazine. We imagine that it's exciting to pick provocative pictures to be included in a mainstream magazine, though—thankfully—you've avoided sleazy photos that exceed the limits of the mainstream. But one reader, Michael Reed of Oregon (*FF* 3:3), complained about too much T&A. Too much T&A for what, *Field and Stream*?

FF has never shied away from introducing naked female flesh into the forum of a mainstream entertainment magazine. Mr. Reed should already be aware of this fact. Furthermore, *FF* has always shown a measure of modesty. With rare exception are any of the actresses too naked for the eyes of the family. And while *FF* often challenges the limits...well, who doesn't?

The photographed actresses seem to be enjoying a new standard of freedom—new freedom to display their bodies in a reputable magazine. The future of acceptable mainstream entertainment is displayed on pages 33 and 34 of issue 3:3, the sheerness is terribly exciting. Keep up the good work.

Jan & Scott Gary
Marnera, New Jersey

Regarding the letters printed in *FF* 3:3...One school of deadly seriousness insists on the elimination of sexy photos. The other school clamors only for more revealing photos, they're in a complete state of denial regarding the intelligence and professional accomplishment attached to the bodies. Case in point was a reader whining about the Sally Kirkland profile (*FF* 3:1); never mind her career, why didn't you shoot *even* more revealing photos?

You must be doing something right to be upsetting these people. Good for you!

Personally, I can't think of anything that's more exciting or erotic than a beautiful, unclad woman who wears strength and intelligence on her face. Shape, size and age are not important, it's the strength communicated on her facial expression...the person behind the eyes, if you will.

Perhaps we can convince the separated camps—minds only, no nudity vs. nudity only, no minds—that they are missing out on the complete experience personified by your wonderful magazine.

In closing, how about an article on actress/producer Toni Naples? She's amazing, and the world really ought to know.

Rod Lambert
Eureka, California

I'd like to address reader Wayne Richards (*FF* 3:3) with one question: *Femmes Fatales* is puritan? Define puritan! Hey guy, look at the *FF* 3:2 front cover of Julie Strain. Or maybe pages 32 and 33 in the same issue, in case you hadn't noticed, the lady is NAKED or nearly so. Or how about the picture of Shy Smith in *FF* 3:2? And let's not forget that, three years ago, *FF* was launched with that provocative front cover of Brinke Stevens.

If Mr. Richards wants to see more, I recommend he buy a copy of *Hustler*, a magazine that leaves nothing to the imagination. I don't think *FF* aspires to compete with magazines in this capacity. Goodness knows, there are enough of them on the market.

Please do feature on Andrea Roth (ROBOCOP series), Nancy Butler (DROP ZONE) and Alicia Silverstone (THE CRUSH), whom



Toni Naples: her biggest challenge as a producer is Art Wynant's resistance to shoot scenes with fully clothed actresses!

I predict a big future for, if only she would stop doing Aerosmith videos. I look forward to every *FF* issue to read about familiar faces and some new ones. Many of the newcomers are undiscovered or neglected talents who deserve our attention, and your publication gives their careers a boost.

Don't ever change, you're doing a great job.

Frank T. Rolapp
Tacoma, Washington

J.J. NORTH

First off, your J.J. North front cover was great (*FF* 3:3). Will her movie, *ATTACK OF THE 60 FOOT CENTERFOLDS*, be available on laser disc? Could you print Ms. North's address?

Don't listen to readers who are divided over *FF*'s too lurid/too timid pictorial lay-outs. Those who want total nudity can look at *Penthouse*; and the ones who beef about too much exposure can read *Premiere*. Caution: *Leave Femmes Fatales* alone. The articles and photos are perfect class all the way.

Shane Tracy
Kasson, Minnesota

Regarding *ATTACK OF THE 60 FOOT CENTERFOLDS*, I'm happy to see that a "giant woman" movie is being made that finally stresses the underplayed sex angle. I would love to see Michelle Bauer's screen test as the 60 FOOT CENTERFOLD. Any chance of seeing that footage in a future issue? I think Ms. Bauer is gorgeous.

Nothing was mentioned about the movie's release date. Will it debut in theatres? If *CENTERFOLDS* goes direct to video, could you print the release date? It would make a prized addition to my collection.

Wilfred D. DeVos
Salem, Mass

I must say I enjoyed the 60 FOOT CENTERFOLDS article and was left wanting more. When will it be released? Will it be available on video? Is so, how do I purchase a copy?

Patrick Falcon
Fort Coquitlam B.C., CAN
continued on page 68

FAN CLUBS

Send self-addressed and stamped envelopes:

- Tina Desire Berg:** P.O. Box 7075, Van Nuys, CA 91408
- Theresa Lynn:** (Featured next issue), P.O. Box 6057, Hoboken, NJ 07030.
- Linnea Quigley:** Perfect Productions, P.O. Box 430, Newbury Park, CA 91320.
- Cynthia Rothrock:** Inquire about T-shirts, autographed posters, etc. 4654-B East Avenue S, Suite 190, Palmdale, CA 93552.
- Rhonda Shear:** Send \$1.00 for catalogue Perfect Productions (RS-FF), P.O. Box 430, Newbury Park, CA 91320
- Brinke Stevens:** 8033 Sunset Boulevard, #566, Hollywood, CA 90046.
- Rebecca Wicks:** P.O. Box 533129, Orlando, Florida 32853-3129.

FATALE

It's been six months since FF 3:3 debuted on newsstands, and we've been consistently buried under sacks of mail requesting merchandising materials related to cover woman J.J. North as the 60 FOOT CENTERFOLD (check out page 62 for a report on the film's performance at this year's AFM). OK, information regarding T-shirts and posters is imminent, we'll keep you posted. Less speculative is the latest development: Concordia has commissioned Lasting Images to produce a set of trading cards on ATTACK OF THE 60 FOOT CENTERFOLD, each illustrated with pre-shots of North in the title role. Jeff Merlo, president of the company, notes he "has seen starlet trading card sets that are named by cheapness and third or fourth-generation photo reproductions. They're awful. Our cards are mounted on a glossy surface and printed directly from transparencies. J.J. and Concordia deserve the best and they got it."

Merlo is also taking a set of trading cards for Concordia's CAGED HEAT 3000, in addition to a Snow Summit set which "is devoted to actresses—including J.J. North, Theresa Lind, Lorena McCormac, Carolyn Tate-Loren, Ava Cadell, Mandy Lough, etc.—wearing goosebumps in snowy, frigid environments." For further information, send a self-addressed envelope to Lasting Images, 100-A #3 Spanglers Road, Suite 267, Cherry Hill, New Jersey—08003.

Actress/Screen Play author Vivian Schilling (FF 13) is preoccupied with her second book, but may

have the opportunity to relax those writer's cramps: Schilling has been cast in RUMPELSTILTSKIN, scheduled for production in Budapest, Hungary. Anuro Gal (LEPRECHAUN II & III) will play a supporting role, the producer are currently negotiating with Christopher Reeve to play the King. A representative for Twin Dolphin and Safe! Films, Ltd. noted, "The movie will combine state-of-the-art effects with a classic fairy tale story to meld the sci-fi genre with a family concept, thus broadening the film's appeal. There's a great finale scene with 40 title people, a la WIZARD OF OZ."

●VAMPRESS: LADY OF THE NIGHT is about a call girl murdered by vengeful syndicate bosses. She's resurrected as a seductive agent of the undead who, even at the risk of losing her soul, wages out the mob's crime lord. Deborah Dutch a veteran of horror movies (HAUNTING OF MORELLA, HARD TO DIE), not only portrayed the film's title role but served as co-producer. Written and directed by Philip Cable, the erotic horror thriller will be distributed by America International Entertainment.

●Ms. Dutch is also featured in the plot outline of DEJA VUEW, an anthology series hosted by one half of Blondeje, Julie Ann. Described as a sexy TWILIGHT ZONE, each hour-long show offers a combination of erotic vignettes that probe into fantasies, secrets and maybe even nightmares—real and imagined. Created by executive producer Philip Jones (PRINCESS WARRIOR, TIME BARBARIANS), the cast of the pilot also includes Annette Harger and Lorena McCormac.

●Ms. McCormac (FF 23), a resident of Cincinnati, has expanded her brief trip to Hollywood into a two-month tenure. Translation: she's in demand. Upon completing her assignment as an sexy cyborg in Fred Olen Ray's DROID GUNNER, McCormac co-starred with FF cover woman Rebecca Ferrell in an osulent, interactive CD-ROM game titled THE RING. She's currently playing a pivotal role in Concordia's remake of the 1976 cult classic, PIRANHA.

●Brinke Stevens joined the cast of Ray's DROID GUNNER (European title CYBERZONE) as a lifeline alien who performs an exotic striptease to a cheering audience of astronauts and—oh, what the hey—Mr. Stevens will personally tell you about her spin on Catherine's next



From vibrant to vocal: a veteran of the Sideris Classics, sharing Ava Cadell belts out "No Love Blues," one of her debut album's SOUNDS OF SEX.

issue. Meanwhile, here's the latest the actress/FF staffer is collaborating with Jeffrey Talley on a screenplay titled HAUNTING FEAR II: BURNED NIGHTMARES, a sequel to Stevens' 1990 horror film. She's also writing "Jacking-In," her first fictional work in ten years. The short story, about a female slave adult in a virtual reality world who turns the tables on her captors, will be printed in HotBlood '00 (Gerb and Garrett Publishers).

●ELECTRA, a sexy science fiction thriller leaning on fetishism, is scheduled for an April shoot. The premise involves a prodigy, endowed with super powers, who must outwit his evil stepmother. Cast includes Shannon Tweed and Erica Anderson (aka Amazon Gladiator "Diamond"). Director Julian Grant, whose short film CREEP qualified for an Oscar nomination, notes he'll approximate the visual style of Mario Bava's PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES.

●New Hampshire-based filmmaker Scott Piper, whose horror spoof THEY BITE served as the cover story for FF 21, is developing a film anthology titled SHOCKARAMA. Piper has already shot a half-hour mum tale for the movie, though the segment may also serve as a product reel for a proposed TV series. The screenwriter/director is pitching the plot to less prominent cable outlets as a result of Christine Veronica's extensive nudity. Veronica, whom Piper previously directed in THEY BITE, ideally comes down with her bearded stalker via one scene's forage to PSYCHO. Piper types

the vignette as "no worse than a bad cold, and definitely better than a starving terror in your pants." Um, we enjoy your film, Bee—but we suggest you work on a slightly more commercial tag line.

●Ava Cadell (FF 31), a siren of the Sisters Cinema (FIT TO KILL, HARD HUNTED), turned author with last year's Hot Spins, a book co-written by actress Jane Hamilton. This year, Cadell sings Sounds of Sex, a collection of nine steamy tunes—including "On Your Knees," "Sexyeye," "Sexology" and "Kiss Whip" (caution: if you live near an Amish community, turn up the volume at your own risk). Available on CD for \$14.95 and cassette tape for \$11.95 (postage & handling included). Within each lamby-illustrated carton is a contest alert: "Share your fantasies with Axl! Win a chance to star with me in my next music video. Just let me know which song turns you on the most and..." Send orders to Ava Cadell, 8528 Sunset Boulevard, #901, Los Angeles, California—90046.

●The video success of SORCERESS (FF 24) has prompted the evitable SORCERESS II. Part I's Jim Wynorski and Julie Strain are reprising their functions as director and star for the sequel. Shooting is scheduled for May on a slave plantation in northern Florida. Julie Strain, last issue's centerfold and the star of Andy Sideris' (Eurocentric) epic and last issue's centerfold, co-stars in a scenario best described as vintage Wynorski: "Bad girls play with voodoo—and all kinds of lesbian hell breaks loose." □

Lorena McCormac, one of this magazine's staffers, Sideris a cheeky disposition in FF's Baltimore office.



THE BRIDE OF JACK O' LANTERN

FORMERLY CAST AS THE PERENNIAL HOMEMAKER, REBECCA WICKS CAN'T WAIT TO STRIP OFF THE APRON STRINGS.

BY LINNEA GUNLEY

Not every photo of Rebecca Wicks is intended to melt your libido. Matter of fact, some pictures render a sexy but maternal Penny Marshall-type. But with legs that reach my shoulders, and huge green eyes that twinkle, Wicks is hard to pin down. As an actress, she's a four-year veteran, yet tonight, posing on a soundstage for *FF*, she just started to unveil her sex appeal. Allow me to introduce you to Florida's resident femme fatale. The Connecticut-born Wicks was raised by a philharmonic family. Her Juillard-educated mother is an opera singer. Wicks' dad and sisters are no less musically inclined, practicing on several instruments. A violin and viola virtuoso, Wicks was admitted into the musicians' union by age 16 (this whole "child prodigy" story is lost on her friends, who clear the room whenever she unloads the violin case). Earning a B.S. in Computer Science and Technical Writing, Wicks relocated to Boston. She was working as a computer consultant when her then-boyfriend announced plans to move more than the furniture. "Let's go to Florida," he trumpeted. Wicks' comeback: "Let's pack." (Insert your favorite John Williams score here; the music swells.) Arriving in Orlando, she shelled-out \$700 to a modeling agency that was promoted in a local paper. Assuming the fee would garner some rep-



"The GATOR BAZE movie was adapted from a phony trailer shot for BIKINI DRIVE-IN. I play the title role, a Claude Jevings-type ballast."

resentation, Wicks learned from some burned clients that she bought herself some serious grief. Wicks marched back to the office and demanded her money back. She got it. The situation prophetically telegraphed the character she would play in *BIKINI DRIVE-IN*; "I will not be denied," she hisses as a knife-wielding "Gator Babe." But I'm getting ahead of myself, here.

Wicks landed legitimate management, via agent Philip Karr, earning visibility in TV commercials and a film

debut in *BIOHAZARD II*. Here's a little preview of her role as the movie's impregnated mom: she gives birth to a slimy mutant, dies and fades out as the credit crawl starts to roll. (OK, so I spoiled the opening scene of the movie—sur me). Anyway, Wicks had to spend hours with a special effects expert between her legs (write your own jokes, but the effects guy—whom the crew refers to as "Lucky"—supervised the delivery of the alien baby). She subsequently played a doting, sitcom-type mother in *LIVE BAIT*. But Wicks' character adds a spin to television's combination Steffed Wife/happy homemaker... seems she assists in the burial of 10 friends whom her offspring decides to slaughter (naturally, mom worries about her son's clothes getting dirty). Call it "THE DONNA REED SHOW: The Lost Episode."

Gritty, unglamorous stuff, but at least the Big Apple has seen more than Wicks' acting aptitude. Clutching an abbreviated towel to her nude body, Wicks was photographed for a 40x70ft. billboard, pitching the Embassy Suites Hotel, which was hung in Times Square. The exposure prompted one of her past beaux to call and inquire, "Rebecca! Is that you?" Similarly, her theatrical work, performed in Orlando, hasn't gone unnoticed. John Travolta and Barry Williams are among Wicks' supporters. Adept at comedy (*SISTER MARY IGNATIUS EXPLAINS IT ALL TO YOU*), she's no less effective delivering



“Though I play a wholesome mother in **JACK-O’-LANTERN**, I preferred to bare myself for **FF** to scotch the maternal stereotype. Though initially a little scared, I enjoyed wearing anything more than my birthday suit and a prep from the movie.

"I want people to see I can play soft and sexy, beautiful and hot. The horror movies are a blast, but I don't want to be indefinitely locked into that genre."

the goods with straight drama (STEEL MAGNOLIAS, NUTS). Wicks lampooned sitcom icons in THE BRADY BUNCH UNCEASING (she played the brood's mom) and L'AVERNE AND SHIRLEY spoof but her turn as movie star Ginger Grant, in a stage "dramatization" of GILLIGAN'S ISLAND, was a show stopper. During one evening's performance, she plunged into a kiss with an actor who portrayed the Professor; in the process, her wig detached and dropped to the stage floor. Wicks, remaining in character, told the Professor that she experienced a couple rounds of chemotherapy. Her ad-lib brought the house down.

I first became acquainted with Wicks on the set of JACK-O'-LANTERN. The film reunited her with Fred Olen Ray and Steve Laskaw, respectively the producer and director of BIOHAZARD II. Wicks, once again cast as a youthful mom, offers a summary of the script: "A man named Kelly was accused to have killed the title character, a demon who's half-man, half-

pumpkin. It turns out he only entombed it. My son in the movie is a fifth generation descendant of Kelly and is cursed by the Jack-O'-Lantern. So my screen family is terrorized by this monster. There's a lot of mayhem, though my character—a loving mother—is very assertive."

On-screen, I—as Wicks' hollywood—develop a crush on her husband. Now that rivalry required some real acting. Shooting during a rare cold snap in Orlando, we instantly liked each other. Then again, who wouldn't like Rebecca Wicks? I mean, she invited me to lodge in her apartment, which she shares with Susan Francee, another accomplished actress who also appeared in BIOHAZARD II and played Shirley opposite Wicks' L'averne. Next time yours truly is in Florida, I'm gonna accept that invitation, Miss Francee promised me, in advance, she'd hide Wicks' violin. Alright!

Wicks is single right now and probably won't commit until "I'm attached to someone's who's just like me, only male." I should print her 800 number...nah...on sec-

*On the left I'm recreating my pose for an Embassy Suites Hotel poster, which was reproduced as a 40x70 billboard (below) and printed in Times Square.

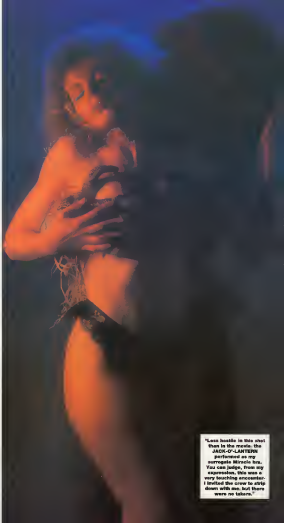


ond thought, send your valentines to her post office box (check out page 4). But don't count on a long courtship or romantic hayrides, it seems she's too preoccupied with her professional obligations. Take today, for instance. During the morning hours, Wicks starred in ACCIDENTS IN THE WORKPLACE. Don't look for this epic on your video shelves, it's an industrial film (believe me, Wicks could cause some serious distractions—maybe casualties—just strutting the distance between the water cooler and Xerox machine). Much later tonight she'll spend some long hours wrapping JACK-O'-LANTERN.

But now, right before my eyes, Wicks is shedding her clothes for the aforementioned photo session. So why is this hair to June Cleaver's apron strings swapping maternity for the exposure as a siren? "Because I'm tired of being looked at as a mom," Wicks sneers. "The casting directors call me for those bigger-than-life characters. My eyes are big, and my face is dynamically expressive, so they call me for the goofy-type things like reaction shots for commercials. I'd like to shake the 'mother' stereotype and one other thing—much of my commercial work has been comedy, and this typecasting shouldn't desensitize film personnel to my glamour. I know that this other, much more sensual side of me exists. And it was also totally fun for me to show this other side of myself. I want people to see I can play soft and sexy, beautiful and hot. The horror movies are a blast, but I don't want to be indefinitely locked into that genre."

And she's been granted the opportunity to reveal that "beautiful and hot" side in GATOR BABES, a parody of yesteryear's "bayou bitch" movies that turned the late Claudia Jennings into a drive-in diva. "The film originated as

continued on page 60



"Less hectic in this one than in the movie: the JACK-O'-LANTERN performed as my surrogate Miracle box. You can judge, from my expression, this was a very touching encounter. I invited the crew to strip down with me, but there were no takers."



Bridgette Wilson in
MENTAL KOMBAT's
"George Blaise." Though
adapted from a video
game condemned for
its gratuitous carnage
(stylized images of
exploding heads, exposed
spines and severed
beating hearts) the film
is rated PG-13.

BRIDGETTE WILSON

SONYA BLADE

THIS YEAR'S "MOST PROMISING ACTRESS" PRACTICES *MORTAL KOMBAT*, BASED ON THE CONTROVERSIAL VIDEO GAME.

BY DOUGLAS EBY

Winner of the 1990 Miss Teen USA crown, Bridgette Wilson looks back upon the contest as a positive experience: "The pageant was based mainly on your interview skills, plus an evening gown competition. Having the practice of that to win my state-level competition, then go on to the nationals as well, I travelled throughout the country for a year, as a spokesperson for different organizations. All of that, put together for an entire year, helped me to be at ease with people in interviews and auditions."

Wilson made a conscious choice to pursue her expanding drama career at the age of 12, when she and her sister and mother had an opportunity to make a trip to Tennessee, a place she says she had always wanted to see, "and to this day I've never been there, but I chose to be in a musical instead. I'd always been involved in singing. It was an active choice to pursue being a performer."

In addition to acting, she continues to grow as a



Wilson deflates *MORTAL KOMBAT*'s violence. "There are always reasons behind the fight, there's motivation and so many internal things each character is going through, in their mind, that the other characters don't know."



Wilson's past films have been less physical, including a role as Adam Sandler's school instructor in the sleeper hit, *BILLY MADISON*.

singer, with a record deal in Japan, where she has been recording. "I love music," Wilson says. "I'd love the opportunity to develop that more over here, or even to play the role of a singer, to put the two together in a film."

She's elated that her career may socially impact audiences. "What you see in film and media is so powerful, and stays with you. People complain about there being too much violence, or too much of this, too much of that, but as much as violence sticks with you, so do images like women fighting back against abuse. That scene in *THELMA AND LOUISE* where she shoots the rapist in the parking lot

that had such an impact. Audiences went wild over it. I thought it was great."

Born and raised in Gold Beach, Oregon, with a population under 2,000, Wilson grew up in a family that supported her career ambitions. She moved to Los Angeles at age 17. "Yeah, I just went for it. I enrolled in an acting class, and I worked in a mattress shop, and did little odds and ends until I got my first acting job."

Wilson graduated early from high school, recalling, "I always worked quickly and got A's in my classes, so my senior year I was able to get all of my credits at half-year. I graduated with my class, but that other half

"Violence sticks with you; so do images of women fighting abuse. Audiences went wild over the scene in *THELMA AND LOUISE* where she shoots the rapist."

year allowed me to travel around with the [Miss Teen USA] pageant, and other things."

Recounting the mental training exercise required for *MORTAL KOMBAT*, Wilson attributes her martial arts education as reinforcement for her strength as an actress. But she cites another influence as a career boost. "The most empowering thing I have in my life is the love and support I have from my family. My sister lives with me, which is a part of home that's with me every day. When there are things that I'm excited or nervous about, every day I can count on a call from my grandparents to say "Good luck," and my mom and sister rooting for me out the door."

"It's comforting to know when you're stepping into someone's life, and meeting them for the first time, you're walking in with so many special and wonderful things from your life that if you meet and respond to them, they can feel and share and appreciate these things with you. And if they don't respond to you, when you walk away, you haven't lost anything. Everything that matters has carried you through it, which is what makes it okay to get by when things are not so good. I'm just so lucky. I know people who aren't as fortunate, and I count my blessings every day."

While Wilson accentuates her professional goals, she admits that domestic bliss is equally important. "That's an even higher priority to me. I think in part that's because I've had such a great family life growing up, that to have my own

family and children to share things with will be the ultimate success and, when that time comes, being a good mother and good wife will be my first priority. Later down the road, if I continue working as an actor, that would be great, too. I feel very fortunate to have done as much as I have at such a young age because I've been able to experience and live it, and hopefully continue. I also knew the only reason I've been able to do all this and enjoy and love it, is because of what I had growing up, and I would never want to take that from anyone, and I want to give that to someone, meaning my own children someday. Then, by far, my whole life to date, will have been much more enriching than my job."

The actress is still in search of a role that's "completely out there, where you don't even look at the outside of the character because you're so fascinated by what's going on inside. There have only been a few things to come along, but nothing yet I'm actually doing where I said, "What do I have to do to get this?" I'm still trying to find that, and in the meantime, there have been some great things come along that are interesting and fun, but not the really intense, challenging role."

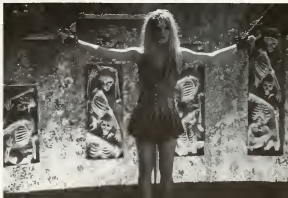
Wilson used to be a national spokesperson for MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Drivers): "It was great for me. Fortunately, I've never lost anybody to drunk driving, but I know people who have. I felt fortunate to be part of it because it was an organization of mothers, an adult group, and I was able to be their



Wilson, as a Special Forces agent, is abducted by evil overlords of the Underworld, Shang Tsung (Cary-Hiroaki Tagawa). Her captivity notwithstanding (below) Wilson is more femme fatale than damsel-in-distress: "To play a violent role, and take a bad guy out is fun. When I was doing my own stunts, I had a great time."

young voice. It was my opportunity to connect with the children, and feel I was impacting their lives and educating them in a positive way about something that really needs to be addressed. I'm still a supporter of it, but not as actively involved as before."

She is also an active supporter of the American Oceans Campaign, and various AIDS charities. "Those are things I go to and am usually involved in as much as I can. I'm not in charge of anything or a spokesperson, but I try to make myself available to help out. I like to be involved for myself, as well as to educate people. And it absolutely helps me as an





Linden Ashby, as martial arts star Johnny Cage, bonds with Wilson in the *MORTAL KOMBAT* tournament to defend the future of mankind.

actor, because I think that the more you learn in any situation, any phase of life, whether it's an organization or just walking down the street and meeting new people—all these experiences help me as a person and as an actress. Especially living in a city, you close yourself off to a lot of things, and walk with tunnel vision to where you need to go. When I step

back and look at the people next to me, and feel them, understand them, and listen to what their saying, it's helpful to me because I can draw from those people when it comes to acting and finding a character. There are many wonderful things to learn from the people around you."

In contrast to her school teacher role in *BILLY MADISON*, and her stu-

"There was some intense stuff going on because you end up hitting each other once in a while, and you end up getting cut and there's real pain involved."

dent role in *HIGHER LEARNING*, Bridgette Wilson portrays Special Forces agent Sonya Blade, a part requiring intense physical fitness and capability, as Wilson noted on one of the elaborate sets for *MORTAL KOMBAT*: "Ever since I got the role I've been going through martial arts training. Now I'm going to be able to do all my own fighting. Get down and dirty. I'm loving the training. I hate exercising if I have to go to an aerobics class or something—I just get mad. I get hot and sweaty. But with martial arts, you get so focused on doing what you're doing that you're sweating and working out and don't even realize it, and you leave feeling lighter, you float. It makes you walk differently. It makes you aware of your own power. It pushes you out of yourself and lifts your whole attitude and mindset. When you get into a fighting mind, you're much stronger."

Having completed her work in the film, she is still training: "I'm doing

some things to keep it up on my own, but I haven't continued in a class. I was just talking about that with my sister. It was such a great form of exercise, and, of course, I can only do so much of it on my own. Every day, when my sister gets up to ride the bike, I'll do the stretching exercises that we used, and some of the kicking to keep myself limber, and let my mind go there. It really is great."

Wilson feels the movie is not just another series of battle scenes and great fight choreography. "There are always reasons behind the fight, there's motivation, and so many internal things each character is going through in their mind that the other characters don't know. There's so much going on that it causes this feeling of electricity around everybody."

"To play a violent role and take a bad guy out is fun. When I was doing my own stunts, I had a great time with it." She recalls some scenes fighting with Kano (played by Trevor Goddard): "There was some pretty intense stuff going on, because you do end up hitting each other once in a while, and you end up getting cut. There's real pain involved. But it gets you that much more mentally amped up, pumped up to do it, to finish it out. Yeah, I enjoy the physical part of it—the intensity, mentally, too, to be at that place."

Wilson is enthusiastic about the process of making this project: "I love the people I'm working with. The atmosphere, the attitude, the energy—it's all there. Jobs like this make me realize why I do what I do." □

Wilson, billed with juvenile actor Austin O'Brien, initially garnered attention in Arnold Schwarzenegger's epic "family comedy" *THE LAST ACTION HERO*.





Though enthusiastically
reporting the
"intensity" and cool
rapport of **MORTAL
KOMBAT: Women** is in
pursuit of a role that's
"completely out there,
where you don't look at
the outside of the
character because
you're so fascinated by
what's going on inside

CYNTHIA ROTHROCK

LAUNCHING A SAUCIER IMAGE, THE PREMIER FEMALE ACTION STAR IS TRAINING FOR A NEW FIGHT: HOLLYWOOD!

By FREDERICK C. SZEBIN



Trivia question, how often does an actress earn billing above the title? If you think that one's tough, try this one on for size: how often is an actress so critical to a film's success that her name exceeds title space on the poster? The action-adventure market formerly reduced female roles to abducted victim or sipping sidekick. But the ad campaigns tailored for Cynthia Rothrock's movies hardly draw a demure picture of a "squeeze" or intimidated maiden. Video sleeves, which magnify and elevate her billing above the remaining players, are emblazoned with titles that proclaim the contentious qualifications of her characters: LADY DRAGON, ANGEL OF FURY... UNDEFEATABLE. Get the picture? She turns the bad guys into chopped liver, and Rothrock is cognizant of her influence: "The children are playing Cynthia Rothrock at



"Doing this FF shoot was an opportunity to change my image," explains Rothrock. "People always think of me as the laugh, fishing girl. The movies I do don't show me in a sexy light." Perhaps the actress star hooks up for a Golden Harvest film.



"The *PP* pictorial was a new thing for Cyndi," explains Tom Vollich, *Rolling Stone's* photographer. "She's never been photographed as a person but as a character. And she was nervous; it had nothing to do with having her body but with looking herself

home, which is kind of fun. The women are saying, 'Yes! We have a role model, a hero. It's about time!' And the men are just saying, 'Wow! She can kick ass!'

Introduced a decade ago in a series of Hong Kong films, Rothrock eventually starred in profitable vehicles that prompted sequels: CHINA O'BRIEN I&I, MARTIAL LAW I&I, HONOR AND GLORY I&I and FAST GETAWAY I&I. Her remarkable physical skills, combined with an appealing, unassuming sexuality, have made Rothrock a popular fixture on American video shelves and overseas theatre screens.

Recalling her birthdate, Rothrock refers to herself in the third person ("Just say she's in her 30's!"). Information regarding her birthplace is more admissible; Wilmington, Delaware. Rothrock's flair for the martial arts was ignited at age 13. She attended Boston University for one year and, after a hiatus, returned to teach martial arts. By the early '80s, her skills garnered awards in a series of competitions; to date, she remains the only woman to be christened Five-Time Undeclared World Karate Champion in Forms and Weapons (1981-1985). Rothrock is also a lethal expert, equally adept at brandishing a sword, staff, spear and steel whip. Nominations for the Black Belt and Inside Kung Fu Halls of Fame delivered endorsement offers.

"I did a commercial for Kentucky Fried Chicken," recalls Rothrock. "They called me because their main theme was 'Number One in Sports' and they had seen me on the cover of a magazine. I did that and thought, 'Well, this is great!' I got paid a lot of money. It was fun, and they said that they would love to do other things with me. It sort of gave me a little bug. At that point, my mind was to be five years undefeated in Forms and Weapons. Nobody had ever done that. People have won two years

CYNTHIA ROTHROCK

"I asked the Chinese producers if I could say my lines in English. They said, 'Sure, these movies are shot without sound—doesn't matter what you say!'"



Rothrock fought FAST GETAWAY producers over their insistence on a nude scene. "I took my top down but didn't really show much. I felt it was gratuitous."

in a row, dropped to number two and came back up. But for that whole five years, I was undefeated. It was a pressure for me. I went to China to get better. I studied in Taiwan and Hong Kong. I had to keep a step ahead of everyone else."

THE HONG KONG YEARS

By 1983, Rothrock was living in Northern California and working with the West Coast Demonstration Team. Word spread from the grapevine that Golden Harvest, Hong Kong's purveyor of movie martial arts mayhem, was on yet another Los Angeles quest to discover the next Bruce Lee. Observing Rothrock's performance of self-defense techniques, followed by her deft demonstration of forms and maneuvers, the company decided to turn their proposed action hero into a heroine.

"I had a contract," she explains, "but I hadn't heard from them for probably two years! Finally, one day they called and said they wanted

to shoot a movie with me. That was in June, 1985.

"At that point in my career, I didn't really think I was going to have acting as a profession. I was teaching martial arts and, again, my goal was to be number one in the Forms for five years in a row. That was where my head was at during that time. I went off and did the film, YES, MADAM. It was a big boxoffice success. So, right away, they called me to do another picture. After that, I realized that I really liked acting and thought I would pursue that as a career. By 1985, I finished my title of number one, five years in a row, and retired. I figured, 'Now I'll get into acting.' I ended up staying in Hong Kong until 1986 and did seven films there."

Groomed as a composite of Clint Eastwood and Bruce Lee, Rothrock was cast as an androgynous avenger in movies (THE BLONDE FURY, IN THE LINE OF DUTY, THE MAGIC CRYSTAL, INSPECTORS WEAR SKIRTS, etc.)

released theatrically throughout the Far East and European territories. Half the planet acknowledged her as their premiere female action star.

But the martial arts luminary faced some off-screen challenges—specifically, acclimating herself to the male-oriented business of filmmaking and a culture that branded women as subservient. "I have seen it in personal relationships," relates Rothrock. "When I first arrived in Hong Kong, I think they were kind of leery. They didn't know what to expect and then, when they saw me fight, I think I earned a lot of respect from them. It wasn't like I was just a woman, it was like, 'God! This girl can fight better than men!'"

"Actually, I think I was probably the only foreigner who has ever had lead roles in Chinese pictures as the good guy. They always have them as the bad guy, or the token caucasian, for a gimmick. They respected me as an actress. People were very nice, respected what I said, and listened to what I had to say. They gave me a Chinese name, Law Fu Lock. I think they literally tried to say 'Rothrock,' and that was the closest Chinese three

MARTIAL LAW UNDERCOVER was among the multitude of Rothrock movies to spawn a sequel.



syllables they could figure out (laughs)?"

During the first day of shooting her debut film, Rothrock was exposed to a chronic case of culture shock; she was obligated to recite all of her dialogue in Chinese. "Never mind having to just say them in English," she grins. "Chinese is the hardest language in the world to speak. I tried it. I started going, 'Young kum-mo, kum-mo, kum-mo!' Everybody looked at me like, 'What's she saying?' I asked if I could say my lines in English and they said, 'Sure! These movies are filmed without sound, so it doesn't matter what you say!'"

Reflecting on her earliest introduction to Hong Kong filmmaking, Rothrock admits, "I never thought to ask about sound. ANGEL OF FURY, for instance, was filmed entirely without sound. When it came time to dub the film, I had never really done much dubbing before. They came in and said we have to dub the whole movie! I said, 'You're kidding! The whole movie?' and they didn't have a script! They said, 'What did you say there?' (laughs). I said, 'What? I don't know what I said!' It was terrible,

"In earlier movies like MARTIAL LAW, I'm just a girlfriend who doesn't say much, she hangs around and fights."



CYNTHIA ROTHROCK

"When I first went to Hong Kong, I didn't know about wearing long sleeves to conceal pads for fight scenes. I had short sleeves and I was so bruised!"



GUARDIAN ANGEL was among Rothrock's U.S. productions: "Americans shoot in full scenes. In Hong Kong, you get your lines three minutes before you shoot!"

a disaster. Imperial put that film out in the States. I was trying to beg them, 'Please! Don't release that movie! It was one of those that make you want to say, 'Oh, no!'"

"My first shoot was an all-nighter, which I wasn't used to. So, of course, I stayed up all day and didn't have a call time until 11:00 at night, finishing at six the following morning. My first shot wasn't even until four a.m. They gave me a piece of ginger and I thought it was candy. Ginger makes me deathly sick, which I didn't know at the time. I ate it and, all of a sudden, my face turns purple and they say, 'You can spit it out!' (laughs). So now I'm sick, trying to stay up all night, and I have a major fight to do! What a way to start!"

Her ignoble overture notwithstanding, Rothrock's burgeoning film career plainly fit her fighting proficiency. Though stunt doubles were accessible for more perilous feats, including car collisions and high falls, Rothrock's Hong Kong

tenure didn't preclude her from suffering more than a few bruises: "In YES, MADAM, a guy hit me in the face with a kick, hitting me so hard that he split my inner ear open. And in MILLIONAIRE'S EXPRESS, I got hit in the face with a sword. I had to jump out of a 30-foot building with a fake baby in my hands, wearing a dress, while an explosion was going on behind me. While doing that, I hit my knee to my forehead and I thought I broke my knee. A lot of things happened, like getting hit in the face with a chain."

"I remember filming a fight scene where guys were kicking my leg. I had pads on, but it still hurt. They kicked me so hard, I couldn't stand it anymore. I said, 'Now you have to go to my left leg.' In one movie I did in Hong Kong, I was fighting on a ship with all these girls who were so bad that the scene looked really stupid, so they ended up cutting that out. I was glad they cut it, but I wasn't very

happy I had to shoot all that for nothing. When I first went over to Hong Kong, I didn't know anything about filming. I didn't know to wear long sleeves or jackets because you have pads on. I had short sleeves on, and I was so bruised! There was a scene where two of us were fighting this bad guy, and we were all bruised so bad that the scene had to be cut because every time we blocked hands, everybody's face flinched—like, 'OW!' (laughs)."

Hong Kong's seat-of-pants, Spartan style of filmmaking kept Rothrock on her toes for seven pictures. According to Mike Leader, *FF* Hong Kong correspondent and production executive at Videocam Film Company (Wanchai), Rothrock's popularity induced producers—including Jackie Chan (*INSPECTORS WEAR SKIRTS*)—to expand her roles in projects that were already midway or near completion. Additional footage and close-ups were shot to beef-up action scenes in *CITY COPS*. Leader notes that an extra 40 minutes tagged to *FEMALE REPORTER* prompted a title change to *BLONDE FURY*: "After filming was completed, Cynthia flew off to the U.S. to film the two *CHINA O'BRIEN* movies for *ENTER THE DRAGON* producers Fred Weintraub and Robert Clouse. Golden Harvest executives decided that [director] Mang Ho's film didn't contain enough action so, upon Cynthia's return to Hong Kong, additional footage was shot. The story was changed so Cynthia's profession was changed, impromptu, to an FBI agent. This resulted in a movie where, from one consecutive scene to another, Cyndy's hair changes length and color. But there was a plethora of action scenes, including the spectacular original finale where Cyndy takes on a Thai kickboxing champion who, due to his strength, caused Cyndy to battle him with metal arm protectors under her sweater."

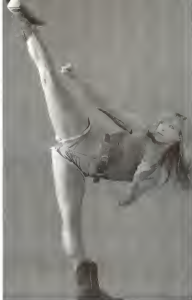
Determined to span the

U.S. market, Rothrock tried to negotiate the sale for her Hong Kong pictures. Golden Harvest, however, insisted that a fire destroyed the negatives. "At least that's what they told me," groans Rothrock. The movies, however, have surfaced in America's Chinatown video stores: ABOVE THE LAW, RAGING THUNDER (available in the U.S. as NO RETREAT, NO SURRENDER), and PRINCE OF THE SUN, the latter a \$35 million curiosity that Leeder describes as "a kind of weird variation on Eddie Murphy's THE GOLDEN CHILD. It has never been officially released since its completion in 1991."

Rothrock stresses the huge difference between U.S. and Chinese preferences for filmmaking: "Basically, the Chinese pictures are all fighting. The fight scenes are about five to ten minutes long. In American films, your fight scenes are very short and the stunts are not very dramatic. In Hong Kong, they'll spend an entire day just rigging one particular stunt. Over here, they wouldn't take the time to do stuff like that. It's a lot harder."

"On every picture I did over there, I got hurt. I'd always say, 'This is it! This is my last picture! I'm quitting after this! They're going to kill me!' Then I'd heal and see it on the screen and I'd say, 'Oh, my God! That's great! Did I do that? OK, what's the next one?' That happened after every film when I was over there. It was tough. I think it's very hard for someone to pursue a career like that over in Hong Kong. It was brutal, really."

Pierre David initiated Rothrock's professional transition to American turf. The producer happened to be in Germany during a period when one of Rothrock's movies was backed in full houses. David, impressed



"I know my strong point is with action. That's where my audience is. But if I was sent a script which required me to just act, I'd do it as long as I know it would be shot well."

with the promise of a caucasian girl kickin' butt in Hong Kong pictures, offered Rothrock a co-starring role with Chad McQueen in MARTIAL LAW, her first U.S. produced film. Completing her Golden Harvest contract with CHINA O'BRIEN, Rothrock retired from the rigors of performing sans script.

BACK IN THE U.S.A.

"Being on an American set felt a lot better because I had a script I could study from," she beams. "I had actors speaking in English, so I didn't have to listen for the last syllable they were going to say and go, 'OK, now it's my turn to come in!'"

"Americans shoot in full scenes. In Hong Kong, you'd say one line and then they'd

cut to the other line. And you never have a script. You get your lines like three minutes before you shoot! It's so good to have a continuity of the scene to understand what the people are saying. I felt it was good training for me in Hong Kong because if I made mistakes, it didn't matter."

It was on the set of MILLIONAIRE'S EXPRESS, her second Hong Kong picture, that Rothrock became acquainted with best friend and occasional U.S. production partner, Richard Norton. The ruggally handsome Aussie has displayed his own panache for martial arts, playing roles that have oscillated from appealing heroes (HONOR AND GLORY I & II) to bloodthirsty villains. "In MAGIC CRYSTAL," says

Rothrock, "I split Richards' eyebrow open. He's probably the only person I've ever injured. We were worked 36 hours straight, and were doing this major weapons fight scene at night. Either he went up when he was supposed to go down, or my sword somehow ended up where his head was. It was just a cardboard sword, but I remember he looked at me, and there's blood pouring off his eye. I was going, 'Oh, my God!' They hurried him to the hospital to get stitched up. The producers put the funniest wig on a stunt man to double for him, but Richard came back with stitches—and his eye swollen—and continued to fight!"

As Rothrock's namesake in LADY DRAGON, Norton and his co-star were matched in a final battle which the actress describes as "one of the hardest fights I've ever done. We shot that in three days and were hitting so hard! It was a real strong fight. Afterwards, we laughed about it. We know each other and how the other fights. We trust each other. Whenever you do an action picture, especially if you're getting into some serious fighting and really going for it, you're going to get bumped and bruised. We've all had that happen."

The only similarity between Parts I and II of LADY DRAGON is the title. The sequel's martial arts scenes were comparatively minimal, offering Rothrock not only an entirely new character but the opportunity to flex her acting muscles. Cast as a kickboxer turned rape victim, Rothrock is terrorized by assailants who later murder her spouse. Early in the film, Billy Drago's knife-wielding looney physically assaults the heroine; driven by method acting, Drago made the rape scene more realistic than anyone on the crew could have speculated.

"To me," explains Roth-

rock, "LADY DRAGON II was a different film, almost like doing a horror-martial arts piece. In the hospital, there was a flashback where Billy is raping me. When I did that, I was exhausted. It was such an acting experience for me. What ended up happening was the producers cut the scene.

"Billy went totally off the wall, and the producers were stunned. They didn't know what to do! He had my mouth and nose covered, and I actually started hyperventilating. I was trying to get him off me, but he was intensely into this scene. When he finally released me, it took about a good five seconds before I could even catch my breath!"

Recounting the traumatic experience, Rothrock pauses and slowly musters a grin as she recalls Drago's artistic excesses. "For three days afterwards, I couldn't talk. It was so scary. It was probably one of the most—God!—emotional scenes I have ever done. Billy came up afterwards, kissed me and said, 'Thank you, that was great.' But the producers said it was too violent and they cut it. I guess they think a lot of people don't want to see Cynthia Rothrock having that happen, so

CYNTHIA ROTHROCK

44] posed for *Femme Fatales* because it was time for a change. It's the first time I was shot like this but, as we progressed, I felt more comfortable."



"I don't do these 'girlboss' pictures anymore. At that point in my career, it was true. If you see GUARDIAN ANGEL, that's a little bit more of what I'd like to do."

they made the scene very short."

FAST GETAWAY also scotched the usual surfeit of chop-socky scenes. Co-starring with Corey Haim and Leo Rossi, Rothrock almost butt heads with producers who were eager for the actress to make her debut in the nude. "I took my top down, but I didn't really show anything because I felt it was gratuitous," she explains. "I don't need to do nudity in a film, because people watch my fighting. If a script came to me that was very good and called for that, and I felt it wasn't gratuitous, then I would consider doing it. But, most likely, it wouldn't be in your typical action picture unless the story was more of a romance. It would have to be a really, really artful project for me to do something like that.

"On **FAST GETAWAY**, the producers said I didn't have to do a frontal nude shot, that you would see just a little butt on the side. I said, 'OK, fine.' Then, right before shooting, the director came

in and said, 'Oh, they want you to do full nudity.' I said, 'Huh-uh. No. Just call my agent before we shoot the scene.' Then they didn't say anything. I think it became a matter of, 'Let's just see if she'll do it.'"

But she didn't. The sensuousness of the scenes between herself and Ken Lermer is communicated only with Rothrock's bare back and Lermer's comically overwhelmed expression. "When we were doing the rape scene in **LADY DRAGON II**," she continues, "I said to Billy Drago, 'Do whatever you want, just don't rip my clothes off.' Because if I was going to do something that involved nudity, I wouldn't want it to be something where they rip my clothes off. To me, that's gratuitous. It would have to be a love scene that's totally called for, but not something like, 'Oh, she's ripping her top off and now she's fighting with nothing on!'"

TOO FATALE FOR TV

Rothrock, in collabora-

tion with her seven-time co-star Richard Norton, wore an extra hat as **HONOR AND GLORY**'s co-producer to research the business and "find out how much money people make off of you. We've been talking about producing our own project, raising the money and just doing it ourselves. Then people said, 'No, we've seen you and Richard too much. We want to see you with other people.' But Richard and I wanted to do something different, something that had more romance to it with a love scene. But nobody wanted to do it! They said, 'No, you can't do that in martial arts!' Why not? We actually did a little bit of a love scene in **HONOR AND GLORY II**, but they cut it out.

"It's funny how some producers think. A lot of times, the schedule is rushed so they'll cut the fight scene or scenes get dropped that you like, or you can't do something the way you want to do it. This way, if you're a producer, you can make sure you have control over what you want."

But it was political constraints—with the media serving as a scapegoat for rampant crime—that derailed Rothrock's two-hour CBS pilot, **IRRESISTIBLE FORCE** (1994). Described as "DIE HARD in a shopping mall," Rothrock's favorite film was cast with veteran actors Stacy Keach and Paul Winfield. But a showcase of heavy artillery, as well as Rothrock's "unladylike" maturity, ruffled network executives who yanked the film from U.S. distribution. The film was released theatrically overseas, and eventually found a home on Fox's foreign video market.

"My agents wanted to sell the pilot to a syndicated network," reveals Rothrock, "because it's the best work I've ever done. But CBS doesn't want to release it. I

"If a script came to me that was very good and called for nudity, and I thought it wasn't gratuitous, I'd consider doing it. It would have to be a really artful project."

As **GUARDIAN ANGEL**, Rothrock's flair for fighting reflected her real-life skills in martial arts competitions.







Rothrock earned respect from her Hong Kong (and New York) employers: "It was like, 'God! This girl fights better than men!'"



The only woman to be crowned Five Times Undeclared World Karate Champion in Forms and Weapons (1981-85), Rothrock showed her stuff in *MARTIAL LAW II*.





"If I was going to do something that involved reality, I wouldn't want it to be something where my clothes are ripped off. It would have to be a love scene that's totally called for—well, 100, who's ripping her top off. Now, she's fighting with nobody on!"

Rothrock rehearses with her UNDEFEATABLE stunt double. "He doubled for everyone in the film," notes co-star Donna Jason. "We just changed hair pieces."



CYNTHIA ROTHROCK

"I was, for the longest time, the only woman making martial arts movies. It was hard for me to get in, but I've been opening doors for other women."

don't even have any photographs from the film, because it's their policy not to send out promotional material on something they have decided not to show. It's sitting there and I don't know if they will ever show it. The fighting was great. I brought in a choreographer from Hong Kong and we did a lot of Jackie Chan fighting. I felt that if CBS would air it, the film would probably do well because there's a strong, action-oriented audience out there as well as viewers who just want a good story."

A phone call to the CBS Media Services confirmed the film's condemnation to limbo. "It was a pilot for last season that didn't make it to the air," reported a network official. "A lot of pilots didn't make it to the air." Our request for photos was greeted with a pregnant pause, followed by an encore of the "pilots that make it on the air" speech.

Even while the TV movie was in production, Rothrock and director Kevin Hooks were experiencing turbulence from nervous executives. "Kevin would get notes," she recalls. "No kicking to the head." Kevin would go, "What? Are they crazy?" I have this woman who can do this amazing stuff and they don't want a kick in the head? So he just shot it the way he wanted to. He filmed it like a good theatrical feature. Needless to say, there were a lot of kicks to the head (laughs). I remember saying to Kevin, "What if I kick him in the head, he falls down and shakes it off? It's not like I floored him with it." But the network was really tough. No blood, no kicks to the head or groin."

While her agents are pitching a series to the less conservative syndicated networks, Rothrock is opting for a more leisurely-paced schedule than usual. Her next star vehicle is tentatively set for fall of this year. In the meantime, Rothrock has appeared in the sexy Grand Guignol thriller, *FATAL PASSION* (formerly *DARK RED*). Though originally offered the lead, she declined the plummer role because the obligatory nude scenes "made me chicken out. Instead, I played the girlfriend

The pose notwithstanding, **FIRST GETAWAY** addressed Rothrock's usual quota of chop-sucky mayhem.





Fastback pitched an action film that was interlarded with romance and a love scene. "But nobody wanted to do it. They said, 'You can't do that in martial arts.' Why not? We did a little bit of a love scene in **HONOR AND GLORY II**, but they cut it out!"

who gets dumped. It was really fun to do that. A couple of people sent me scripts that were intended for myself as the lead in non-action roles. I don't go out for non-action parts, and I'm not the first person a producer or casting agent would have in mind, I guess. But they do pop-up here and there.

"I know my strong point is with action. That's where my audience is. But if someone would send me a good script, and want me to just act, I'd definitely do it as long as I knew it was going to be shot well."

Success, particularly on an international scale, inevitably breeds cloning; hence, a parade of Rothrock replicants have assumed roles as "martial arts madams." Anyone remember Lucinda Dickey? After the inexplorable success of *BREAK 'N'* (1984) and its equally trendy sequel, Dickey was cast with She Kessup in *NINJA III: THE DOMINATION* (her "revenge-seeking Ninja," noted one critic, was plunged into a plot best described as "THE EXOCIST meets ENTER THE DRAGON"). One horror movie later, Dickey faded into anonymity. Then there's Kathy Long who, co-starring with Kris Kristoferson, flouted her "lethal form" in the low-budget *KNIGHTS*. Mimi Lescote was *PUSHED TO THE LIMIT*, while pretty Hilary Swank was promoted as *THE NEXT KARATE KID*. Catya Sassoon, daughter of hair tycoon Vidal, was billed with Dan "The Dragon" Wilson in *BLOODFIST IV: DIE*

CYNTHIA ROTHROCK

"The biggest challenge for me is getting a major theatrical release. Executives just do not want to invest the time in a woman action star."



Rothrock considers her self-essence image, manifested in the very physical role as *GUARDIAN ANGEL*, to be positive. "The women are saying, 'Yes, we have a role model. It's about time!'"

TRYING and *BLOODFIST VI: GROUND ZERO* until finally performing solo in *ANGEL FIST*. Rothrock, Don Wilson's real-life crony, recalls *The Dragon* "was really upset with the producers of *BLOODFIST* because they said Sassoon was a kickboxing champion or something. Don told me she didn't really know any martial arts."

Reflecting on her pioneering role as a female action icon, Rothrock is less than livid when addressing her

imitators. "I've come up in a very competitive world. Competition doesn't bother me. I was, for the longest time, the only woman making martial arts movies. It was hard enough for me to get in. But it seems throughout my life, I've been opening the door for other women to get involved with this. I was the first woman to be on the cover of a karate magazine and the first woman to win a men's championship. It just sort of opens doors, which is great.

I feel that if there's more competition, it makes you try to be better."

STRENGTH & SEX APPEAL: SWINGING OUT AT HOLLYWOOD

But Tinseltown is still dominated by boy's clubs, and Rothrock's unabated, non-provincial heroines have been underestimated by an industry that prefers pigeonholing. "The biggest challenge for me," she elaborates, "is getting a major theatrical release. It seems as though executives just do

not want to invest the time in a woman action star. I've come across that a lot. And even in my earlier movies, if you look at *MARTIAL LAW I* and *II*, I'm just the girlfriend who doesn't have much to say. She's just hanging around and fights. I don't do these kinds of pictures anymore. At that point in my career, it was fine. I've been lucky if you see the *LADY DRAGON* films, *GUARDIAN ANGEL*, there's a little bit more of what I'd like to do."

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Billed as *Law Fe Lock* in her Hong Kong productions, Rothrock notes that she was "probably the only foreigner who has ever had lead roles, as the good guy, in Chinese pictures. They always have them as the bad guy, or the token Caucasian, or a girlie. They respected me as an actress and listened to what I had to say."



Soap & Sorcery

LARA PARKER, THE SIREN ON DARK SHADOWS, PROBES INTO THE FILMS HER PUBLIC WASN'T INVITED TO WATCH.

BY JEFF THOMPSON

Let's face it, femmes fatales are the engines that fuel daytime soaps. But DARK SHADOWS eschewed the traditional gold-digging busy and introduced serial addicts to a literal vamp; negligee-clad Angelique combined her expressive eyes and wicked laugh to romantically bait male prey. Even the solemn Barnabas Collins wasn't immune to the blonde beauty's bloodlust. Turning to less sanguine quirks, Angelique practiced sorcery to dissuade her minions from renouncing her sphere of influence.

Somehow evoking sympathy with her character's more pronounced debauchery, Lara Parker was cast as Angelique in 1967, more than a year after DARK SHADOWS made its TV debut. She remained a major player on the Gothic series until its final telecast on April 2, 1971 (Parker played Catherine, a character unrelated to her popular temptress, during the final three months of the show) A familiar face on the tube, Parker surfaced during the daytime (CAPITOL, ONE LIFE TO LIVE) and prime time (THE INCREDIBLE HULK, KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER)



Parker played a prostitute in *SAVE THE TIGER* (1973), a film that earned Jack Lemmon an Oscar. "My scenes were shot at the Filmmade in downtown L.A."

Parker reprised her Angelique role for the theatrical NIGHT OF DARK SHADOWS, a 1971 spin-off of the TV series. Other big-screen assignments included a memorable turn as a compassionate call girl in *SAVE THE TIGER* (1973) and 1975's *RACE WITH THE DEVIL*, which portrayed Parker as a victim of demonology.

These days, Parker is haunted by her "evil" past. Episodes of DARK SHADOWS have turned up on video cassette and the Sci-Fi Channel. A renewal of enthusiasm is manifested in the flood of fan mail addressed to Parker, not to mention her steady engagements at DARK SHADOWS revivals on both coasts. On October 27, 1994, a national audience observed Parker's reunion with Jonathan Frid (Barnabas Collins) when the couple was chronicled on CBS-TV's 50 YEARS OF SOAPS True, Parker made a significant impact as Angelique, but she agreed to lift the "dark shadows" regarding the remainder of her career.

Was NIGHT OF DARK SHADOWS your first theatrical film?

Well, before that I did part of another one that was never released—

APRIL IN THE WIND (1970)?



Parker made an omelet from the breakfast, turning to teaching and screenwriting. "I don't have much interest in acting anymore. There are very few roles. It makes no sense beating your head against the wall. But, at some point, I might do something."

“DARK SHADOWS was a mix of horror, kink and absurdity—the things that people who talk about the show tend to deny.”



Loraine 'Hot Lips' Lind and Parker are sexy for Satanists in *RACE WITH THE DEVIL*. It was more like the film was not supposed to be high art.

there all day. So I made as good a salary as I thought I would, but the part did turn out to be smaller.

Maybe *NIGHT OF DARK SHADOWS* wasn't as well received because it was different from the TV show. I don't know whether this is true or not, but I think the same thing happened when Dan did the new series. [Dan Curtis, who originated the daytime *DARK SHADOWS*, tried to renew the soap as a prime-time series. *Isaac Newton* was cast as the Angelique role, but the show didn't survive its 1991 season] Dan was always drawn to toward making *DARK SHADOWS* more romantic. I guess the ironic thing about *DARK SHADOWS* was the campy element to it, and the more romantic and realistic you made it, the

more that [campy element] seemed to disappear. As Dan matured and his tastes matured, I think he wanted something more adult. But I think the thing that really appealed to people about *DARK SHADOWS* was its peculiar personality, which was not really very realistic. It was more of a strange mixture. The romanticism was there, but so was the horror. So was a tongue-in-cheek quality, an investment of horror and kink and absurdity—all of those things that people who talk about the show tend to deny.

It was very excessive, over-the-top, overdone.

We played it that way, too! We were encouraged to play scenes fully—very, very strongly. If we tried to be subtle, the directors would say, "I want more!" Actors are always trying to be realistic and subtle—that's part of the craft, to try to make it real and believable—but the directors would say, "No, no, no! You have to give us more!"

In the world today, there is a tendency to respond to things that have a certain unique personality, and that's what *DARK SHADOWS* had! There are so many things that are just realistic or just romantic, and in [1990] I actually spoke to Dan—I don't think he paid any attention to what I said because why should he?—but I said, "You've gotta make the new *DARK SHADOWS* kinky." I was thinking about how much I liked *TWIN PEAKS*, the ability to present something absurd and astonishing. But I think Dan really wanted a very strong, emotionally true, romantic, deeply involving show. What he wanted was true Gothic horror.

You had a marvelous part in RACE WITH THE DEVIL—

I worked very hard, and I had a good time doing that film. It was interesting that it was about witches I had a problem with the ending...

It was very doozey.

I thought that my character should have disappeared since she was the one who was the most suspicious. She should have vanished without a trace, or in a pile of ashes or a pile of clothes. That would have been a more interesting ending in terms of something that would leave you thinking. I suggested that to [writers] Lee Frost and Wes Bishop, but they didn't take the suggestion. They had gotten it into their heads that they wanted this ring of fire to end the movie. At that time, B-horror movies were about car chases, motorcycles and special effects. One of the interesting things about that film is that a different driver did each part of the chase. They'd bring in a driver who knew how to do a flip, and they'd

Yes. Very little of it was filmed. We worked about two weeks. The script just made no sense at all! It was a fantasy, and I was hired almost entirely for my look. I was placed opposite a male model, and we shot some hysterical scenes! We shot one scene in a "swan boat"—a boat that was completely covered with white feathers—that we hitched up to cables and dragged across a lake in Central Park in the early morning mist. They pumped fog over the water so it would look ethereal and heavenly—like something out of *Susan Lake*—and we just sat there and looked beautiful [laughs].

Who was the director?

I don't recall. I just remember there were a couple of people who got it into their minds to make this movie, but the script could not be understood. Then something happened—they lost their backing, or they ran out of money—and it was never finished. I was also in Brian DePalma's film, *HI, MOM!* [1979], which was shot in New York while I was in *DARK SHADOWS*. That was all improvised—there was no script! I did four or five scenes in that movie that didn't make it into the final print. I did a scene in a bathtub. It was a bubble bath, so I was desperately trying to keep my bra and panties from showing through! That scene, along with several others, never made it into the film. Once again, I was supposed to have a big part, but I didn't.

Did the scripts for year-after movies call for nudity?

No, just that *HI, MOM!* scene. There was a time when people were nude on the screen and on Broadway. It wasn't as unusual as it would be today. It's funny how we've returned to a certain amount of conservatism. But people were really testing the waters there for about a decade!

The NIGHT OF DARK SHADOWS script contained many scenes that didn't appear in the finished film. Do you remember working on any specific scenes that were omitted from the movie?

Yes. One of the things I do remember is that [producer/director] Dan Curtis was often apologetic because he indicated to me that *NIGHT OF DARK SHADOWS* would be about Angelique. Then, as the writing of the film and the filming itself progressed, it changed and he built it more around Kate [Jackson] and David [Selby]'s relationship and their romance. I guess he felt it would draw a bigger audience. Several times, he apologized to me because I guess he felt he had led me to believe that my role was supposed to be bigger. I was often called to the set, and then I didn't work. I'd get into makeup and costume, and I'd stay



Parker as DARK SHADOWS' vamp Angelique. Her character's scenes in NIGHT OF DARK SHADOWS (3) were reduced from substance to a spectral presence

bring in a driver who knew how to drive on two wheels, and they'd bring in a driver who knew how to do another thing, and they put them all behind the wheel and cut it all together. I was aware that RACE WITH THE DEVIL was not supposed to be high art.

Were there any scenes that may have imperiled your own well-being?

The scene that was the most memorable was the one with the snakes! They had a snake wrangler who, first of all, had to warm up the snakes or they don't even move! It's very hard to get a snake to strike. If rattlesnakes bite you, it's dreadful, but they don't tend to bite easily. I think they filmed a whole reel just trying to get those snakes to strike. They milked the glands behind the snakes' fangs and removed the fangs and sewed up the mouths so that only the tongue could come out, so the snakes were completely safe. It was a real kick working with rattlesnakes being thrown on me and my grabbing them and trying to get both the snake's head and its rattle in my close-up while I was screaming.

In SAVE THE TIGER, which earned Jack Lemmon an Oscar for Best Actor, you were effective in a supporting role as a prostitute. Thayer David, who played multiple roles on DARK SHADOWS, was cast in the film as a professional arsonist. Did you cross paths with your former

co-star?

We saw each other at the screening, but not on the set. I worked only two days on that movie. My scenes were shot at the Biltmore in downtown Los Angeles. David Selby [DARK SHADOWS' Quentin Collins] was working on UP THE SANDBOX, also at the Biltmore, with Barbra Streisand. He and I ran into each other in the lobby.

Five years later, you were reunited with David and Selby for an ABC miniseries, WASHINGTON BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.

That's right. You certainly are up on your fasion.

In 1982, you made a movie titled FOXFIRE LIGHT.

I filmed that in Bronson, Missouri, a pretty area. It was written by Janet Ranley, who has written dozens of romance novels, but she didn't know

anything about screenwriting. It was just a little romantic story and the man I had a romance with was Leulle Nielsen. It was a boring little movie that didn't have any conflict at all. The scenes were hard to play because they were so static—nothing was going on. There was never any conflict, so there was never anything to play!

I understand you've assigned yourself the real-life role of a teacher.

I was a student teacher [of high school English] for three semesters. I'm sending out resumes to schools.

And you been developing some projects as a writer—

I'm working on my fourth screenplay. I have not had much success yet, but I've learned a lot. It's been a process of growth for me because when I started, I expected it would be a lot easier! I thought, "I've read so many scripts, and

I've played so many scripts, that it shouldn't be hard for me to write scripts." But I had to start from scratch. People who write—and only people who write—know that it's not as easy as other people think it is. Screenplays are a real challenge because they're basically pictures. What you're doing is writing for pictures to be taken, so you really have to learn to visualize. At the same time, screenplays demand structure. People have expectations when they sit in a movie theatre. Certain

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Parker, as DARK SHADOWS' Angelique, seduces vampire Barrabas Collins (Jonathan Frid). "If we tried to be subtle, the directors would say, 'I want more!'"



LINNEA LAUGHS LAST

BRANDED A "SCREAM
QUEEN," SHE'S REBORN AS
A WRITER AND TV HOSTESS.

BY STEVEN PALTY AND LORISSA MCCOMAS

She's paid her dues—cranking out B-grade after B-pleasure, routinely cast as a victim of abuse, rape or grisly murder. Then along came **RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD** (1985). Her character, Trash, was a punkish outcast who danced naked in a graveyard and propitiated her own death. Critics, manured with the starlet, liked Linnea Quigley from anonymity and into the spotlight. Some insiders insisted Quigley was only a heartthrob from admission to the Academy: You'd bet she'd been asked by the likes of Mel Brooks. But again



received the opportunity to upgrade Quigley's audience celebrity, preferring to exploit her while she iron was hot. Quigley's career was marigolded by advances without respects, covered floor lessons at the track by indignantly bawling her out to collect their 10% cut per abysmal role. Her profitable appeal flourished and was eventually lost, adrift in too many cheap movies that suited the video market. Insiders, who branded her a "screen queen," declared Quigley B.O.A.—condemned to a future of hawking autographs at conventions. But Linnea Quigley is savoring the last laugh. Had everybody fooled. She's wasn't dead, just playing possum and is experiencing none of the labor

"Critics generally had me in with the 'screen queen' class. But I advanced from that level to a higher level. I'm not only a star, I'm an icon. I've worked, a couple hundred times over, in every medium from video to film—such as TV commercials, actor and director."





Right, "Debra Lamb and I remain in close fellowship against Hollywood." Top: RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD bowled Quigley, cast as an assassin couple (above), into the spotlight.



pains of rebirth. Quigley voluntarily dropped the "scream queen" handle and is wearing triple hats as actress/writer/TV hostess.

Upon my arrival at Quigley's San Fernando Valley home, I'm greeted by four dogs and three cats that she rescued from animal shelters. "I would do anything to protect them," says Quigley. "I would kill anyone who could hurt or would kill animals." And she means it. Quigley has shed the juvenile-nescent navets and baby fat, a combination that perpetuated the "perky coed" stereotype. Her eyes, which have gazed upon a strained marriage and professional disappointments, reflect more experience than physical maturity. Quigley has turned into a woman, a character actress. A diminutive 5'2", and likely to tip the scales at only 100 pounds, Quigley is also a Hollywood rebel, sobriety is in while the party circuit, late-night carousing and

flavor-of-the-month designer drugs are out. Aside from her lack of inclination to turn "swinger," Quigley's new career direction dictates a disciplined adherence to an "early to bed, early to rise" regimen. For starters, she's prepping for her own TV series which is scheduled for broadcast on the E! Channel. Describing the show as a "docu-comedy," Quigley notes, "We go behind-the-scenes on things like movies, rock videos, different conventions. It's mainly about things that I'm involved with like going on the set of JACK-O-LANTERN, the film I did for Fred Olen Ray. We previously worked together on HOLLYWOOD CHAINSAW HOOKERS.

"I'm also covering the Motherhead and Ramones videos and, I think, the Foxes Monsters convention. We'll do a show where I'm hosting, but we're covering things that I'm participating in, and the camera will be following me around. It won't be like a Barbara Walters interview, it'll just be

LINNEA QUIGLEY

"I read for RESERVOIR DOGS, but they cut out the scene I was supposed to be in. There weren't any speaking roles for women in the movie's final cut."



"We cut the cast from RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD. I loved my "Trash" role, but would like to progress to the strength of Linda Hamilton in TERMINATOR 2."

my own style of asking really strange questions." Quigley is hoping her show will fill a weekly time slot, but nothing will be determined until a certain long-running series goes on hiatus. "We have to wait until the O.J. Simpson trial is over before we know how often we'll be on the air. The E! Channel is telecasting the court hearings during the time period my show will eventually occupy. Anyway, that's why we're building up as many programs as we can right now."

Another imminent project is a modeling session with Olivia. The completed art rendering will likely be reproduced later this year as a poster, greeting card and/or calendar pin-up; however, Quigley doesn't trivialize the collaboration with her favorite artist, she's too immersed in other projects to speculate on the final product. There's the proposed "Trash" model kit, a sculpted replica of Quigley's anarchist from RETURN OF THE LIVING

DEAD. And then there's a comic book chronicle on the boards, all about a chain-sawing-wedding femme fatale named *Linnea*.

Turning *F&F* staffers, Quigley has lined up a series of interviews that will appear in the pages of this magazine. She's also applying the finishing touches to *Skin*, her naughty, insurgent travesty of Madonna's *Sex* and horror films (already the entrepreneur, Quigley is preparing a deluxe edition that is limited to only 300 copies). Piled on the desk are notes for *I'm Screaming As Fast As I Can*, her autobiography which she'll co-write with *People* magazine's Craig Tomashoff. "We'll be going from my childhood to my present," explains Quigley. "We're going to have a lot of different things in the book, like pictures and letters from fans, different people I've worked with, behind-the-scenes stories...things like that. It's not going to be serious, it's more of a tongue-in-cheek treatment, all the

funny things that happened in my life. We're not going to get into things like, '...and then I had my tonsils removed, which was the most painful experience...' I want it to be fun to read."

"Fun" appears to instinctively influence Quigley's demeanor; there's no trace of bitterness or self-pity when she addresses questions regarding rejection. Recounting that she lost HOWARD THE DUCK to Len Thompson, Quigley admits her comedown faded "when I finally saw the movie." She was equally eager to tackle a meaty role in SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIAL, but "lost out to the director's girlfriend." Though her past films were often financed on mammal investments, Quigley especially regrets losing another low-budget movie: "I read for a part in RESERVOIR DOGS, but I didn't get it because they cut out the scene I was supposed to be in. There weren't any speaking roles for women in the movie's final cut. I would have liked to have done that film." Reflecting on more recent assignments, Quigley hopes her role in a 1995 release will survive the final edit: "I worked on Clive Barker's film, LORDS OF ILLUSION and that might cut out. That would be a disappointment because I love Clive. I don't know, yet, whether my footage is intact."

A veteran of over 40 movies, Quigley has appeared in a few productions that remain unreleased (SEXBOMB, DIGGING UP BUSINESS) and perhaps charitably spared her recollection. When reminded of AMERICAN RAMPAGE, a 1988 action film that paired her with Michelle Bauer, Quigley reacts to its lack of visibility with, "God, I had forgotten that I had ever done that film. The hell if I know whatever happened to it!" A couple of other films exist only as fragmentary footage, with further shooting postponed as a result of budget deficits (BLOOD CHURCH, THE NAKED



"Yep, I've showed that 'kween queen' thing. It's a dead end. I'm all pumped up for my new image. Color me the 'victim'—I'm so tragic the victim."

AND THE NUDE! Two years ago, she traveled to Italy for a role in *FATAL FRAMES*, an incomplete horror thriller that draws a frustrated reaction from the actress: "I have only one more scene left to do, but Donald Pleasance was in it and, hopefully, they're not going to need him—especially since he died a couple of months ago. I was over there a for a month and it was just really chaotic and weird. In Italy, they film with radically different procedures than in the U.S. They don't care about the dialogs, but nobody told me that. I would be doing a scene, and the grips would be making noises and people

would start singing! The director would be making these motions, I could see him off-screen. It just blew my concentration. It was horrible!"

Along with the unorthodox production routines, Quigley tried to be tolerant of less-than-luxurious working conditions: "We had to film at this castle outside of Rome, and that was a really weird experience. I had to lay on the floor, in a pool of blood, during a huge thunderstorm for a couple of hours and I was so cold. They were going to take me to a hotel and, in my mind, I was envisioning this nice bath because I was covered in blood. I couldn't get

LINNEA QUIGLEY

"I was a drive-in freak, I'd go and watch things like *BOXCAR BERTHA*. To me, that movie was just as good—if not better—than *THE STING*."

dressed because the blood was so sticky, so I just had a towel around me. It took an hour or so to find the 'hotel' and then I'm standing in the lobby covered in blood, and holding this towel, while people are walking around. The place just had these little rooms where showers were part of the whole public bathroom, and the water kept going hot and cold on me. There was no heat in the place at all. It was awful, just awful. But I ended up spraying a lot of cats over there, and getting people in trouble for animal abuse. That's how I spent my time."

I suppose my next line is supposed to be, "What a trooper!" but this is the sort of fannish stuff that underestimates Quigley's longevity. So let's get something straight, OK? To appreciate triumph, one has to experience conflict. And, upon further probing, Quigley—contrary to the p.r. valetines describing her as a happy-go-lucky B-babe—reluctantly acknowledges the indignities that served as her professional apprenticeship. As an example, she's loathed to discuss *PSYCHO FROM TEXAS* (1981), and shrugs

her memory of the film to a succinct "They made me take my clothes off and poured beer on me. It was stupid."

Even more grueling was her rape scene in *SAVAGE STREETS* (1985), which the director realistically refused to glamorize: the camera doesn't flinch from the violence, humiliation and degradation of a physical assault. It's too repellent to be gauged as exploitation, and Quigley shudders while reminiscing. "It just felt very scary," said Quigley. "It was all too real with the gays, who played the assailants, getting too much into character."

While struggling with low salaries, Quigley observed the celebrity landslide of Vanna White, who appeared with her in a 1981 slasher film titled *GRADUATION DAY*. "I had spoken to Vanna on the set," says Quigley. "She just seemed very new to the business. I do remember her showing me some crazy pictures of herself posing for some kind of mud-wrestling magazines."

Quigley can also be critical of her subsequent work, citing a certain 1993 release

Bribe Stevens, Michelle Bauer and me in a 3-day wonder called *NIGHTMARE SISTER*. Two years after wrapping, we shot PG-rated scenes for TV."



as her least favorite film: "The part I played in BEACH BABES FROM BEYOND is really different and it's okay. But they called me the day before shooting, and I got the script that night, and had to learn all the dialogue by six the next morning, which is pretty impossible. The reason I don't like the movie is because it's just not made well. The music is really bad, there are these shots of girls dancing in bikinis that go on forever. It's bad!"

Let anyone think Quigley's B-film education was indoctrinated through her association with the cottage industry, think again. "When I came to Los Angeles," she recalls, "I started taking acting and modeling classes and all that stuff, and got ripped off a million times. I learned, like, zero. The B-movie thing just happened. I really didn't know that much about it to say 'this is an A-movie' and 'this is a B-movie.' To me, a movie was a movie. I was a drive-in freak. I'd go and watch things like BOXCAR BERTHA. To me, that movie was just as good—if not better—than THE STING or something like that."

Eventually hired for a string of exploitation movies, Quigley admits that she was blissfully unaware of the consequences: "At first, I thought, 'Work is work,' and I was happy to get whatever I could." Determined to develop some autonomy over the shooting and scripts, Quigley tried her hand at producing. "Even more than acting, I always wanted to produce. I wanted some challenge, so I co-produced two of my films with Dave DeCoteau. The first one, MURDER WEAPON [1985], was kind of a nightmare. The house that served as our location was owned by a couple, and the woman thought she was some kind of psychic. She somehow got it in her mind that we were stealing stuff from her house. After two days of shooting there, we had to sneak out our equipment because she was so crazy.

"Contrary to appearance, this shot of Britne Stevens and myself is unrelated to my work with The Skirts, but it was fun to play around with the musical instruments. Happily, Britne and I have realized a goal, starting to film together."



DEADLY DIANE LANE



DREDD GIRL

SHE'S EXPLORED THE GRITTY PSYCHES OF A TEEN REBEL, STRIPPER, AND DIVA—BUT ALMOST DECLINED *JUDGE DREDD*.

BY BILL GEORGE & ALAN JONES

She's very fond of spinning that story, the one about her first day of arrival in England to shoot *JUDGE DREDD*. "I was in such a foul mood when I arrived at the airport from Los Angeles," recounts Diane Lane. "I was jet-lagged and crabby and this person drove me to the Shepperton Studios so I could take a look at the sets. Sure, they were impressive. But I was so tired, I just moaned and moaned, 'I can't believe they chose me for the part. What am I doing here? I'm going to look so weedy next to Stallone. I look like shit, anyway.' And this guy replied, 'Well, we saw your audition videotape and you were perfect. There was a strength about you we liked



and we thought you'd be a natural.'

"I stopped in my tracks. Who was this person I thought was a production dogbody, and how had he seen my audition? Of course, it turned out to be producer Beau Marks who I was berating and taking my amenities out on. He hasn't let me forget about it, either. But I have since calmed down about everything."

Sultry and feisty as hell, Lane was once dismissed as a "child actress," that chilling euphemism for a photogenic tyke whose early success is eclipsed by the plunge into pubescence (the remainder of the "wonder years" are spent in cheap horror films or scandal sheets). But it's likely cynics were not aware of Lane's theatrical background. The daughter of New York drama coach Burt Lane and *Playboy* centerfold ("Miss October," 1967) Colleen Farrington, Lane was only six years old when she landed a plum role in Andrei Serban's production of *Medea*. She toured with the company for the next five years, performing in stagings of *Electra*, *The Trojan Women* and *As You Like It*. Later appearing in Joseph Papp productions, and the off-Broadway version of *Rainy Days*, Lane was



Above: Lane as *JUDGE DREDD*'s city, Judge Hershey. Left: She notes there's a "parallel between *Dredd*" and on-ster *Billingsley Stallone*. Facing: The *Inspector* would win an Emmy nomination.





"I went to see the director and said, 'You want me to do what? Fight an eight-foot robot and beat up stunt doubles? Oh, and ride an exploding bike? Bye!'"

one of the New York metropolitan area's 150 sixth-graders who qualified for enrollment at Hunter College's gifted students program.

Making her film debut in *A LITTLE ROMANCE* (1979), a 13-year-old Lene was unimpressed by co-star Sir Laurence Olivier. "That could have blown the mind of a veteran actress, much less a green teenager," she recalls. "But my age worked for me in a way. You know, ignorance is bliss and I didn't have to act like I knew a whole lot and didn't have to prove anything to anybody. And Olivier didn't expect me to try to do it. He was wonderful, constantly joking about himself and making me feel completely at ease."

A brief flurry of juvenile roles followed, including *CATTLE ANNIE AND LITTLE BRITCHES* and *SIX PACK*. Lene was considered for *BLUE LAGOON*, though Brooke Shields garnered the

Left & facing: Lene's pin-ups were "over-the-top." Below: Brawley with Balhazar Getty in *JUGGED* (1980).



decorative role of a sarong-clad teenage castaway. "Daddy was glad I didn't do it," smiles Lane. "He was afraid I'd end up a Playboy model."

A role as a foul-mouthed punker in 1982's *LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: THE FABULOUS STAINS* convinced casting directors that Lane could effectively portray angst-driven adolescents. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola, she played teenage rebels in *THE OUTSIDERS* and *RUMBLE FISH* (both 1983). One year later, Lane was cast in *THE COTTON CLUB*, a problem-plagued picture also directed by Coppola, that turned into a critical bust. She promptly recovered in *STREETS OF FIRE*, a thinly-veiled remake of *THE SEARCHERS*, playing a high-beeled, Armani-attired rock n' roll diva. Though a commercial disappointment, the film has turned into a cult classic. Lane's admirers consider the film to be her best to date.

Lane's choice of films appear more often dictated by the complexity of character than speculative boxoffice success. Cast in *THE BIG TOWN* (1987), she tackled the decidedly unsympathetic role of an amoral '50s Chicago stripper. "I had to familiarize myself with the era, mold a character who appeared to be a good girl but was essentially manipulative and used people, and, finally, to learn psychologically and mechanically how a '50s stripper worked."

"In those days, the emphasis in striptease was on the 'tease.' It was disposing of your garments slowly and provocatively to leave as much to the audience's imagination for as long as possible. I went to several of today's strip joints as part of my research and the technique is just the opposite. They take off all their clothes as quickly as possible and dance around naked for as long as they can."

Though she worked for six weeks with choreographer Kelly Robinson, Lane ad-





The former starlet (right) melted into a Tennessee Williams farcine (above). Below: Lena freezes off with animator Wilson Eufes in STRIPTEASE OF PINK.



"Judge Dredd is a virgin. He doesn't even know what wooing is, let alone try it out, start or follow through. I reckon I'm the next best thing to a girlfriend."

mila she was nervous about the nudity inherent in her fan dance routine: "But five minutes after it began, I realized the crew was too busy doing their jobs to pay any attention to it and were looking at me like I was just another light stand on the set. So I figured, 'What the hell. They're not thinking about it, so why should I?' When you're doing something like this, there better not be any bulges on your body that aren't supposed to be there. I had to keep on a very strict diet to make sure there weren't. So when everyone talks about all the great restaurants on our location shoots in Chicago and Toronto, you'll understand when I say you couldn't prove it by me."

Her performance as prostitute Lorena Wood, in the TV miniseries LONESOME DOVE (1989), earned Lane an Emmy nomination. Between pictures, she married her PRICELESS BEAUTY co-star, Christopher Lambert. Her subsequent film roles included CHAPLIN's Paulette Goddard, often described as one of the most beautiful actresses who graced the screen. Goddard was among the wives of Charlie Chaplin, who cast her in THE GREAT DICTATOR. "Paulette was discovered by Charlie, and her career blossomed because of the attention he gave her," explains Lane. "He supported her emotionally. I think they comforted each other a lot through awkward times in their lives."

Her approval to perform in JUDGE DREDD, adapted



Above: Lane as THE 88 TOWN'S "smoel stripper." Right: Sparring with spouse Christopher Lambert in KNIGHT MOVES Lambert, an action film vet, had "no sympathy whatsoever" when Lane complained about her blazing JUDGE DREDD stuntwork.

emonger. "He's just so...big," laughs the actress. "I'm terrified I'm going to be dwarfed by the sets and eaten alive by Sly because he's so pumped up. At one point, I begged Danny not to have us appear in the same shot, as I was convinced I'd look puny next to him. But that's what a comic strip movie is, I guess. Not that I was into them, you understand. I'd never heard of JUDGE DREDD until I read the script. It takes a lot of energy and imagination to really enjoy them, I think. I'll stick to Barbie dolls!"

Lane, in fact, is all too eager to scotch rumors regarding a romantic link between Judges Hershey and Dredd: "He's a virgin. He doesn't even know what wooing is, let alone try it out, start or follow through. You start training for Judgeships at the age of five, which doesn't



from England's popular comic strip, is Lane's one concession to the perennial "summertime blackbuster." Cast in the \$60 million production, which director Danny Cannon describes as "STAR WARS meets BEN HUR," Lane portrays Judge Hershey, the title character's ally. The actress, accustomed to performing in more intimate movies with a sublevel of pyrotechnics, originally declined the role. "I went to see Danny Cannon at the casting sessions," smiles Lane. "I said, 'You want me to do what? Fight an eight-foot robot and heat-up stunt doubles? Oh, and ride an exploding bike?"

Bye!"

Lane finally decided to tackle the role because it was completely unrelated to the emotional labyrinths of her past characters. "Judge Hershey is so much larger than life, and far removed from any kind of drama I've been used to," she notes. "It solely relies on the suspension of disbelief. Research-wise, there's very little homework you can do on a character who exists in the future."

When she finally "got over the outrageous aspect of it," Lane enjoyed a good rapport with Sylvester Stallone, who swept the title role from Arnold Schwarz-

leave much room to refine the art of romance. I reckon I'm the next best thing to a girlfriend. Perhaps she is interested in figuring him out, finding the weak spots and digging around in the wounds—the difference being Hershey does try to find a separation between being a Judge and her private life."

Lane and Cannon, who made his directorial debut with the comparatively low-budget (\$3 million) THE YOUNG AMERICANS, developed a mutual admiration. "That's because we are so similar," explains Lane. "Both of us are easily mis-

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ALTERNATE LIFESTYLE

THE LESBIAN VAMPIRE

FEMALE/FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS IN FANTASY
FILMS: CIVIL PORTRAYAL OR MALE VOYEURISM?

By BRINKE STEVENS



Meriel Martie and Alexandra Reizdo as lovers in *THE BLOOD SPATTERED WIFE*. The here, contrived scene of the lesbian union, cuts out their hearts.

"Claire Bloom, a beautiful and skilled actress, had an intriguing role in *THE HAUNTING* (1963), a ghost story co-starring Julie Harris. Miss Bloom played a lesbian artist with extra sensory perception, who, unfortunately, didn't sense that her girlfriend would leave her. The scene which provided these little character insights was cut, and what remained was a shadowy woman with little background information who spent most of her role's running time hugging Miss Harris in crisis."

"The Unkindest Cuts"
Doug McClelland

A classic Victorian horror novella, *Carmilla* (1871), is the dictionary-style definition of the "lesbian vampire" genre. Published more than 20 years before Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, J. Sheridan Le Fanu's story marks the first center-stage appearance of a female vampire in modern literature. A haunting theme of love and



A teacher (Michael Johnson) concentrates his LUST FOR A VAMPIRE with fetching student, Candice Kametala (Fritz Sternward), but the bloodsucking Kametala, a pupil at a girls' finishing school, covers a physical connection with her female student.

“It was a private feminine world, filled with knowing details and deep knowledge; but a provincial 20th century branded these female relationships as deviant.”

sexual attraction exists between two young women, the aristocratic Carmilla Karnstein and the teenage narrator Laura, upon whom the title character preys: “She would take my hand and hold it, gazing in my face with languid and burning eyes. Her hot lips traveled along my cheek in kisses, and she would whisper, ‘You are mine, and you and I are one forever.’”

Back in the 19th century, such close female relationships were socially acceptable. Puberty was a time in girls’ lives when they were strangely fluid, almost amphibious. The bittersweet pangs of adolescence turned their romantic thoughts inward, and on each other. It was a very private feminine world, filled with small knowing details and deep knowledge; however—and a provincial 20th century—would later brand these youthful, female relationships as deviant.

Whenever the lid is

clamped too tightly on sexual desire, an explosion must occur. Hidden passions smolder more intensely, unleashing a paradoxical combination of repression and licentiousness. Spanning six decades of movie history, modern filmmakers enthusiastically seized upon Le Fanu’s original blueprint—and *Carmilla* spawned a legion of cinematic remakes.

Carl Dreyer’s *VAMPYRE* (1932) was perhaps the first such offering, although the name “Carmilla” was never mentioned. Dreamlike and opaque, it was set in a small German hamlet, where an evil old woman preyed upon the two daughters of an innkeeper. It was not uncommon for films of the 1930s to portray gays as predatory, twilight creatures. Sins of the flesh were often equated with horror, for it seems only a monster could yield to such aberrant impulses. Ironically, it’s a truism in the horror genre that monsters are often more appealing to us

BLOOD AND ROSES: In the 1960s adaptation of Sheridan Le Fanu’s novella, Carmilla von Karnstein (Arianna Viding) seduces a bride-to-be (Lisa Marlowe)





VAMPIRES Annette and Marianne Morris. Noted one critic, "It's a male fantasy in which women are structurally objects of terror and erotically desirable."

than are the bland, ineffectual heroines.

As such, the titular vampire in DRACULA'S DAUGHTER (1936) evoked sympathy and alliance from the audience. The elegant Countess Marya Zaleska (Gloria Holden), who is especially attracted to women, futilely tries to escape her family heritage. She is finally destroyed by the doctor who failed to cure her. Although the Countess' sexual preference was only discreetly implied, some of the film's original advertisements alluded to her inclination: "Save the women of London from Dracula's daughter."

The '60s and '70s saw an even greater explosion of saphic bad girls. It was the Age of Aquarius, a period in which clear-cut definitions of masculinity and femininity were challenged and increasingly coming under fire. In many European art films, such as Ingmar Bergman's PERSONA (Sweden, 1966), vampirism was symbolized by an erotic relationship between

two women, in which one begins to take over the personality or soul of the other.

Roger Vadim's BLOOD AND ROSES (France, 1960) made it even more literal. An ending scene shows Georgia (Elsa Martinelli), the rescued heroine, to be an empty shell who is filled only with the black essence of Carmilla's soul. Inferences to the

"Hammer Films applied a sensuous spin to the genre: inhibited women, submitting to the lesbian milieu of vampirism, are transformed into libertines."

vampire's lesbian bent were kept low-key and restrained, making the film seem pretty tame by today's standards (though some footage—presumably ruder scenes—was trimmed from U.S. prints). But an undercurrent of perversity occasionally surfaced in the film, such as when Carmilla (Annette Vadim) and Georgia seek refuge in a greenhouse during a rainstorm. Prodding her finger on a rose thorn, Georgia licks the wound but leaves a speck of blood on her lip. Obligingly, Carmilla leans forward and gently kisses it away. Later, Georgia's dream sequence culminates with herself in the vampire's embrace; her throat is bitten as the couple dance together through the dark.

Lesbian interaction was even more overt in TERROR FROM THE CRYPT (1963), another adaptation of Carmilla. But the presence of Christopher Lee and the story's genesis notwithstanding, the vampiric premise was missing. Instead, the heroine (Audrey Amber) was tormented by nightmares of

a terrible curse inflicted upon one of her ancestors. A tangible attraction also existed between Carmilla (Alexandra Bastedo) and her victim (Maribel Martin) in Vicente Aranda's THE BLOOD-SPATTERED BRIDE (Spain, 1972). Although both vampires retired to a coffin for a nude liaison, the actresses were fully-clothed in publicity photos depicting the same scene.

Films that adhered to lesbian/vampire interrelationships were a by-product of films produced in England, France, West Germany, Belgium, Spain, Italy and the United States. It's a sure bet that the movies were intended for a mainstream audience, not a population that embraces an alternate lifestyle. Lesbian portrayals were predominantly governed by male fantasies, Jess Franco's 1971 contribution to the genre is the self-explanatory VAMPYROS LESBOS. Barbara Steele violently severed her incestuous relationship with her female cousin/lover in Antonio Margheriti's CASTLE OF BLOOD (Spain, 1963).

French director Jean Rollin did a series of surrealist horror films, including LE VIOL DU VAMPIRE (1967), LE FRISSON DES VAMPIRES (1970) and VIERGES ET VAMPIRES (1971)—all of which sacrificed narrative coherence for sadomasochistic lesbian images. They've seldom been seen outside their native country.

Britain's Hammer Films, which launched the previous generation's vampire trend, initially applied a more subdued but sensuous spin, women, who submit to the lesbian milieu of vampirism, are declared libertines. The company's most

Directed by Stephane Rothman, VELVET VAMPIRE Celeste Yarnall is enraptured with Steffy Miles. Yarnall's character, Diane Le Pen, is a homage to Carmilla.





Actress/VJ staffers Lorissa McGee and Carlo Wally as vampire lovers. "Even beyond the fantasy genre, what's so offensive about lesbianism?" asks McGee. "It's not my thing, but there's nothing wrong with portraying this lifestyle on film."



“[Hammer director] Terence Fisher pointed out that when one becomes a vampire, one’s sexual proclivities are no longer strictly heterosexual.”

underrated and Freudian film, *THE BRIDES OF DRACULA* (1960), offered Andree Melly as Gina, a pupil at an all-girls’ school Stricken by a vampire, Gina’s cadaver is resurrected in a stable; the “undead” student is spiritually/literally liberated from her confinement (the barn’s locks mystically unclasp) to seduce the virginal Marianne (Yvonne Moniour). “Say that you forgive me,” beckons Gina, “for letting him love me.” Hammer’s *DRACULA-PRINCE OF DARKNESS* (1965) also interpreted lesbianism as an emancipated environment. Barbara Shelley portrayed a sexually repressed spouse who succumbs to vampirism. In a classic scene, provincial wife Suzan Farmer asks the whereabouts of Charles, her husband; Shelley smiles lustfully and crosses, “You don’t need Charles.” During a subsequent interview, Shelley explained, “...[director] Terence Fisher pointed out that when one becomes a vampire, one’s sexual proclivities are no longer heterosexual.”

Before they transform into *VAMPYRES* (1974), the film’s female protagonists (Marianne Morris and Annika) are introduced as lesbian lovers occupying a hotel room. Their passionate, sapphic love-tryst is interrupted by a pistol-wielding male. Both women are slain, though the assailant’s identity and the motive for the shooting are never established (a jealous lover? a gay basher? an arbitrator of radical right-wing justice?). The ladies renew their alliance as hitchhiking vampires, luring men to their doom in a decaying castle. The screenplay circumvents tra-

ditional rationalization for the couple’s conversion to vampirism, though it’s likely lesbians turning to blood lust was intended to be more allegorical than supernatural (it’s presumed that both gay avengers generically brand males as a species with no tolerance for homosexuals). Directed by Joseph Larras, *VAMPYRES* is an astonishingly graphic film in terms of nudity and blatant sexuality. The level of vicious ferocity and outrages, manifested in the murder of male victims, is also unerving. The film is available on video under multiple titles.

Rooted more in the legend of real-life Countess Elizabeth Bathory than the mythical Carmilla, Harry Krumel’s *DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS* (Belgium, 1971) tended to subvert the traditional voyeurism of these films. The movie avoided the obligatory scene of a male peeper spying on two women in bed; instead, it offers a surrogate role reversal scene of the vampiric Countess (Delphine Seyrig) and her female lover standing outside a window to snoop on a heterosexual couple. The Countess abstains from supernatural influences, instead turning to her feminist convictions; she evaluates the vulnerability of her male prey by analyzing their relationships with women.

Ridley Scott’s *THE HUNGER* (1980), another update of the Bathory legend, is a sublimely decadent film. Not unlike the infamous 17th-century blood countess, Catherine Deneuve portrayed a modern icon of aristocratic vanity who’s youth is maintained at the expense of her victims. The film’s debut was fueled with press speculation involving

FF contacted LUST FOR A VAMPIRE’s Yutte Stenestad (top), but the actress—residing in a U.S. religious retreat—declined comment. Below: Ingrid Pitt, who denies she portrayed a lesbian, takes center stage with her *VAMPIRE LOVERS*.





THE HUNGER's debut was fueled with rumors leeching very intimate scenes between Catherine Deneuve and Susan Sarandon (top), the latter securing a butch-ita appearance. Below: Deneuve grieves when Sarandon, her lover, attempts suicide.





A modern "vamp" (TRANSYLVANIA TWIST, NIGHTMARE SISTERS), author Bruce Stevens applies the sapphic bite to friend and occasional co-star Linae Guthrie.

very intimate scenes between the beautiful Deneuve and Susan Sarandon, who cropped her hair to approximate a hitch-like appearance. Indeed, their personal encounter was one of the most explicit lesbian lovemaking scenes ever shot for an R-rated film, although some viewers have expressed disappointment

that Deneuve used a body double.

Lesbianism, as a recurrent theme in vampire films, may be a hybrid of the international feminist movement that was launched in the early '70s. Males were not yet intimidated by the looming threat of a lusty, strong temptress competing with a man for another female's at-

tention. An aggressive femme fatale, driven by her girl-girl proclivity, draws a paradoxical reaction from men; she's attractive, but also a threat because her sexual appetite may be more insatiable than her male competitor's libido. The lesbian vampire combines two types of sexual outlaws. She is a complex and ambiguous figure, both

an image of death and an object of desire, she stirs subconscious fears, while serving as a focus for repressed fantasies in both males and females.

A lesbian relationship, albeit an implied one, slipped into the family hour. CARMILLA, still another adaptation of Le Fanu's masterpiece, was produced for Shet-

Sealed with a kiss? Susan Sarandon's sapphic relationship with Catherine Deneuve (a good variation of Countess Bathory) prompts THE HUNGER for immortality.



“The lesbian proclivity of the female vampire is attractive to men but also a threat; her sexual appetite may be more insatiable than her male rival’s libido.”

ley Duvall’s NIGHTMARE CLASSICS. This time, however, the setting was transplanted to the deep South; nevertheless, the show retained the attraction and unspoken passion between the title character (Meg Tilly) and her companion (Ione Skye). However, the definitive adherence to Le Fanu’s sapphic intensity was achieved in Hammer’s Karnstein trilogy: THE VAMPIRE LOVERS (1970), LUST FOR A VAMPIRE (1971) and TWINS OF EVIL (1971). Effectively interlacing sex and horror, all three films explored the darkest depths of female eroticism.

By the late 1960’s, cinematic permissiveness not only allowed for a rising tide of on-screen nudity, but lifted taboos regarding an acknowledgement of non-heterosexual lifestyles. Producer Harry Fine, who negotiated financing for THE VAMPIRE LOVERS, admitted, “The explicit lesbianism of our treatment was, I am sure, the miracle ‘extra’ ingredient that attracted American International Pictures.” Obviously, the profits of films that stressed a lesbian theme—including THESE AND ISABELLE and THE KILLING OF SISTER GEORGE (both released in 1968)—prompted that “miracle, ‘extra’ ingredient.” Strangely enough, no hint of girl/girl interaction was visible in Hammer’s art campaigns; on the contrary, posters were illustrated with a near-naked male restrained in a dungeon and recoiling from a fanged female (no such S&M scenarios existed in the movie).

THE VAMPIRE LOVERS, however, was not only the first genre film to garner an R-rating, it promoted an

audacious concept for its time; an unflinchingly aggressive female, unapologetic about her sexual preference, was the central character. The sultry Ingrid Pitt’s vampire—who assumed multiple *nom de plumes*, Carmilla/Mircalla/Mareilla—rapaciously seduced young girls and drank their blood. There’s little doubt about her sexual preference. Lara, a pretty debutant (Pippa Steele), observes Mareilla among the guests at her hall-room party. Turning to her fiancé (Jon Finch), Lara laments, “That girl is staring at you.” Glancing over his shoulder, he casually replies, “Nonsense, darling...She’s looking at you.”

Mareilla: “I have a feeling we’ll be such good friends!”

Lara: “But we already are!”

Mareilla, flashing a Mona Lisa smile, slowly slides her hand down the naïve Lara’s exposed back. “Oh, you’re so kind to me. I swear I shall die when you leave.” Lara prophetically gasps. As



TWINS OF EVIL: Madeleine Collins, lured by Dennis Thomas, repulses Purdiss, who satisfies her vampire hunger by nibbling Isabel Black’s bosom

Mareilla hungrily stares at her intended victim’s jugular, the scene concludes with a subtle kiss. Later, Lara expires in bed after orgasmically writhing and groaning. “No, no more!” But even in the midst of her agony, the dying girl softly calls out for Mareilla.

Reinventing herself as Carmilla, the vampire as-

simulates another gullible victim, Emma (Madeleine Smith). In one scene, the women wear nearly identical gowns as they gracefully float down a staircase. The cloning of his daughter, from her apparent, narcissistic role model, unnerves Emma’s father. Even Madeleine Purdiss (Kate O’Mara), Emma’s sensible tutor, finally submits to the vampire’s charms. As Carmilla pins a glittery brooch close to her bosom, Purdiss reacts with a smoldering expression of awakened sexuality. Later, when Carmilla disrobes before a moonlit window, Purdiss—visibly panting—lustfully gazes at her prospective paramour. The next morning, she wears a conspicuously elevated collar (concealing Carmilla’s hickey) and dismisses a male suitor with an unfriendly, “We shall be busy...Call next week.”

The most revelatory scene almost concludes the movie. Carmilla tries to spirit Emma from the estate,

THE HUNGER: Director Tony Scott, brother of filmmaker Ridley Scott (ALSO), supervises the vampire kiss exchanged by Deauville and Seward





DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS: An abused spouse (Dorotea Quirós) prefers Countess Bathory (Delphine Seyrig) over her husband's sadistic love-making.

leaving behind the distraught tutor, Perridon, falling to her knees, begs Carmilla to "Take me with you!" It's clear that all of Carmilla's victims are impregnated with her. True to Le Fanu's original concept, Carmilla is a sympathetic character because she acts out of compulsion, not malice. A sensuous creature, she falls desperately in love with her hand-picked victims; yet, she's torn between love and bloodlust, feeling empathy for the same girls whom she destroys.

Traditionally, rather than assaulting her female quarry, a feminine vampire languidly seduces her betrothed into becoming accomplices. Seduction suggests a mutual complicity on the victim's part to bond with her mate. But it's also inherently pathological because the self-preservation of one appeals to the self-destruction of the other; one's perpetuity precludes the other's survival. Vampire movies would appear to endorse practition-

ers of lesbianism, though a punishment seems to be inevitably extracted from these gay unions.

One ponders how **THE VAMPIRE LOVERS'** female cast felt about abandoning a heterosexual lifestyle for their on-screen roles. "I decided," said Roy Ward Baker, "that, in my own way, I would try to save this book's

"Irrevocably, the altercation between man and lesbian concludes with the triumph of the male, thereby restoring the sexual 'natural order'."

dignity by at least toning down the lesbianism, and doing it seriously and tastefully. Hammer had some doubts, but the one person who agreed with me was Ingrid Pitt."

Ms. Pitt confided the following to *FF*: "As far as I was concerned, it wasn't lesbianism. It was just human warmth and love and tenderness and hunger and all of that passion. I never minded doing it...It all would've fallen flat on its face had I believed they were lesbians. Mirrealla gave up her life compassionately for another being whom she loved. If there had been something sexual about it, it would've ruined this feeling of love. She truly loved Emma. It had nothing to do with the fact that she was a girl." Unlike Emma, her screen character, Madeline Smith offered a contrary viewpoint of lesbianism: "I really couldn't be less lesbian than I am. I mean, I am totally disinterested in females. In that way, I felt it was distasteful. I hated doing that, I loathed it. In-

grid did, too."

One footnote: Marianne Morris, reflecting upon her sapphic coupling in **VAMPIRES**, insisted, "The sex was very much simulated." A quote in *Mayfair* magazine, attributed to Morris, defensively stated, "I am not the least bit lesbian!" The actress added that she consumed a bottle of Scotch before performing the provocative scene and passed out when the camera grinded to a halt. But director Joseph Lanza contradicted Morris' recollection: "We didn't have money for whiskey. Maybe she drank Coca-Cola, it was cheaper."

C'mon, ladies, chill out! I doubt anyone twisted your arms to be cast as lesbians, so what's with the outrage and denial about the gay lifestyle? Just once, we'd probably all love to hear an actress admit something like, "Well, yes, it was a little uncomfortable at first...But, you know, it was really okay!"

THE VAMPIRE LOVERS' prompted Hammer to further flirt with lesbianism; after all, voyeuristic entertainment, produced on a low budget, delivered the boxoffice goods. But the sequel, **LUST FOR A VAMPIRE** (1971), wasn't as profitable as its precursor though director Jimmy Sangster exploited the maidenly genre with carte blanche decadence. Blonde bombshell Yvette Stengaard was cast as Mirrealla. This time around, she enrolls at a girls' finishing school to run amuck among the nubile students. Pippa Steel, whom Ingrid Pitt loved to death in the previous film, massaged Stengaard and made it pass at her in one of the trilogy's most erotic scenes; but

Andrea Kelly attempts to seduce virginal Yvette Stengaard in **ORDERS OF DRACULA**. The lesbian motif was obviously visible in the film's p.a. campaign.





Male voyeur/voyeeism, Susanna Hall—aka Gene Ray (LADY FRANKENSTEIN, SLAUGHTER HOTEL)—as a Courtesan bathhouse clone in THE DEVIL'S WEDDING NIGHT.

they were of the same ilk. It didn't exceed a kiss on the neck.

John Hough's TWINS OF EVIL, released the same year, followed the formula but wallowed in excess. Identical twins Madeleine and Mary Collinson, who had posed for Playboy, contributed to the cleavage quota in a sexual contrivance with only incidental horror elements (the film's original title was VIRGIN VAMPIRES). Chronologically set in an earlier time period than its predecessors, TWINS is more of a prequel than a sequel though its link to the Hammer series is a rather tenuous one (Miracilla surfaces through some mist for only a cameo appearance). Exemplifying a scene where vampire convert Madeline Collinson sinks her teeth into Isabel Black's ample bosom, there's hardly a trace of lesbianism.

While it may be possible for lesbian viewers to derive some pleasure from the

vampire's sexual escapades, Hammer's trilogy invariably caters to a heterosexual male fantasy. Atypical is a scene in THE VAMPIRE LOVERS, where a topless Carmilla playfully chases a scantily-clad Emma through a boudoir, is tailor-made for the male voyeur. As the couple collapse on a bed, we briefly see them embrace, but the view is abruptly blocked when the camera focuses on a lamp (two large, white glass globes; you don't have to be Freud to figure this one out). LUST FOR A VAMPIRE's lesbian scenes are consistently staged for the male voyeur, which is poignantly reflected in a scene where a man prudently peers at two female skinnydippers (Mesdames Stenagaard and Steel) as they wade and kiss in the moonlight.

The Hammer films were set in the Victorian era, a period when gender roles were immutable: men wore their

dignity up to their tight collars, women were disciplined into subservience. Gay writer Andrea Weiss had a very interesting take on male/female competitiveness in these horror pictures: a lesbian vampire and a mortal man challenge one another for the possession of the heroine. The man is aligned with the forces of good, the lesbian is a literal vamp (evil) and the helpless damsel is merely a receptacle who will succumb to the moral values of the victor.

Irreversibly, the altercation between man and lesbian concludes with the triumph of the male, thereby restoring the natural order; heterosexuality triumphs over homosexuality, and man triumphs over woman. A perfect symmetry is achieved in THE VAMPIRE LOVERS: one scene opens with Carmilla carrying Emma, her intended lover, down the stairs—but the scene fades-out with Carl,

the male vanquisher, carrying Emma back up the stairs. Good prevails over evil. Emma, like the spoils of war, has exchanged hands and the audience supposedly sighs with relief.

The battle lines have been long drawn for our rituals of courtship, though subjectivity undermines what is deemed acceptable and what isn't. Everyone has their own sense of where to draw the line. There will always be rebels: women of potent sexuality who command an erotic power and fascination. Her dilemma? "...And when she was good/She was very, very good/But when she was bad, she was horrid." She's a Molotov cocktail tossed in the face of political correctness, a nihilistic pyrrhic crusading for total, sensual pleasure. Either way, the bombshell has gone off—and, now, there's no pushing her back in the closet. □

Monsieur Noble Henri et les Femmes Fatales

SAVORING SUPREMACY AS "THE NEW ROGER VADIM," VIRTUAL DESIRE DIRECTOR WARNS QUENTIN TARANTINO, "WATCH OUT!"

BY PETER STEWART

It may be titled *VIRTUAL DESIRE* in the United States, but French viewers will undoubtedly realize the plot is a reprisal of *LES FEMMES SAUVAGES DE MAC*. That's because *VIRTUAL DESIRE* is a scene-for-scene remake of last year's huge Euro-hit which translates as *THE SAVAGE WOMEN OF MAC*. And both films were directed by Parisian wunderkind, Noble Henri. The French original's tremendous success prompted American producers to court the young auteur over to Hollywood. Henri's mission: replicate the triumph of *LES FEMMES/MAC*.

The handsome Henri, only 22 years of age, looks more like a *Baywatch* hunk than a burgeoning movie director. Hopefully, his Adonis appearance will not blind critics to this veteran filmmaker's achievements. Four years ago, upon his graduation from high school, Henri started making movies. His first film, a sci-fi fantasy titled *LA DIABOLIKA LADY (THE FRENCH GIRL'S FOLLY)*, won the Ulmer award, a coveted trophy bestowed every other month by *Le Terrain Vogue*. Encouraged by the underground success of his maiden effort which was financed on a modest budget, Henri stepped-up production on his subsequent, more elaborately mounted foray into *cinéfantastique*. The result was the remarkable *PROFESSOR NUT-NUT*, a *Jekyll/Hyde* comedy memorable for the acting debut of Gary Lewis, former band leader of the Playboys and son of comic legend Jerry. The movie, though a com-



Swedish Desire: Teasestar Peggy Theobald plays a "secretary whose IQ equals room temperature."

mmercial and critical winner in overseas markets, remains unreleased in the States as a result of copyright problems.

Nevertheless, *PROFESSOR NUT-NUT* impacted foreign reviewers and drew cult adoration. Noble Henri's celebrity, as evinced at 1994's Cannes Film Festival, sustained the same familiarity as Steven Spielberg. It was at last year's Cannes that Henri premiered the film that will, no doubt, re-

main his timeless masterpiece—*LES FEMMES SAUVAGES DE MAC*, a scintillating story of seduction, deceit, and murder via computer. The movie stunned international audiences, further elevating the humble Henri to cause célèbre status throughout the European film community.

Henri was inundated with offers, from almost every major U.S. distributor to remake the movie. TimesTown executives rationalized that *LA FEMME NIKITA* was Anglicized for the U.S. market as a Bridget Fonda vehicle titled *POINT OF NO RETURN*. So couldn't the same acculturation be applied to *LES FEMMES/MAC*? Maybe, but the French director had other ideas. Noting *POINT OF NO RETURN*'s less-than-fabulous boxoffice gross, and the script alterations which ultimately subordinated the project, Henri positioned for complete autonomy on the proposed remake of his film noir thriller.

There were plenty of conferences with studio chiefs, but Henri claims the brass insisted on control (including the final edit). When the comparatively diminutive, California-based TP Films offered Henri complete creative input, he jumped at the opportunity to move to Hollywood. Sure, the budget is trimmed to one-fifth the investment that Fox or Paramount would have afforded the project; but TP, compliant with the director's appeals, agreed to christen the production "A Noble Henri Film." Now, that's integrity!

We caught up with Henri on the set of *VIRTUAL DESIRE*; he kindly consented to a short interview via his interpreter:



What is the difference between working in Hollywood and France?

Well, in France the actresses put pads under their clothes for enhancement. Here, they put the pads under their skin (laughs).

I take it VIRTUAL DESIRE will have its share of exotic-looking ladies in the cast.

Without question! That's why I consented to talking—to tell of our fabulous array of femmes fatales.

Should we expect a lineup of the usual faces?

But of course...NOT! These women—how do you call them, scream queens?—are too old and flobby to set the screen ablaze with erotic fire.

You mean...?

Oui, my cast of women are all under 30 and can act!

But wouldn't you even occasionally profit, from a certain American fringe market, if you cast your film with these screen queens?

NO, NO, NO, it takes more than phony names, and grande derrieres, to make it in my movies.

Well, who have you cast in your show?

First and foremost, I have starred the wonderful Julie Strain. She is to beauty what Jerry Lewis is to comedy.

I see. What sort of character does Ms. Strain play?

A tall, statuesque computer expert who may be the key to untangling a bizarre murder plot. She was born for the role. Only Luciana Valante, who essayed the



Tammy Peris (50 FT. CENTURFOLD) makes waves in the beach scene.

part in my original French version, did it better.

As a director, do you find the language barrier a hindrance?

Mai oui, this is why the casting of the girls is so important. Beauty is the international language, and I do not want to...ah...

Compromise?

As you say. The material is too important to use second best.

I understand some of your casting was influenced by this magazine.

Ah for me, there are only two great American movie magazines, *Film Comment*

continued on page 81

Left: Rusty Harris as a suspect. Below: Elizabeth Berger as a flight attendant; Laraine McCann as a computer nerd; Catherine Welton, the movie's leading pro.



STEAM QUEEN BLISTERS "BOMBSHELL" IMAGE

ELIZABETH SANDIFER, WHO SUPPORTED THE SHANNONS (TWEED & WHIRRY), IS RETIRING FROM EROTIC THRILLERS.

BY TINA DESIREE BERG



The sweet, young ingenue steps off a bus in sunny Southern California. Packed within her suitcase are the stuff that starlets' dreams are made of, there's makeup, a hairbrush and hope for survival in a town where pretty faces multiply like wildflowers in the countryside. Yeah, this already sounds like all too familiar exposition to a sordid B-movie...you know, the one about a cute ingenue who takes a wrong turn at the casting couch and winds up in fishnet, twirling a handbag under a Hollywood Boulevard lamp-post. But the "Elizabeth Sandifer Story" fades-out with a different spin.

Sandifer, a native of Jacksonville, Florida, initially sampled "a serious inclination to act" while auditioning for a regional presentation of *Who's Life is it Anyway?* "I thought I'd go for one of the smaller roles," she recalls, "but I ended up with the lead!" Probing a serious career in theatre, Sandifer transplanted herself to New York and enrolled in the American Academy of the Dramatic Arts. Completing a curriculum that included Shakespeare and dance, she hit high stakes on a film career.

Next stop, Los Angeles. Only a few months of routine auditions had lapsed before Sandifer landed her first movie. Cast in SILENT OUT-

"Erotic thrillers don't express the full range of my creativity as an actress. It's fun to be sexy, but there's a lot more to life."





Top: "PAMELA PRINCIPLE II has a moral for the '80s." Above: "The acting in ANIMAL INSTINCTS II was just in the rafters." Below & right: "I was cast as SEXUAL OUTLAW's Sharon Stone-type."



LAW (1993), an erotic thriller, her on-screen duties included an impassioned tryst with gymnast Mitch Gaylord. "It was 120 degrees in this tiny little room," recounts Sandifer about her intimate scenes with the Olympic gold medalist. "I was soooo nervous. The entire film crew and Mitch were very nice, since I didn't know what to expect. The scene was really well-written, which helped, and I soon felt comfortable with the situation." SILENT OUTLAW turned into a rewarding film debut, with the actress asserting her dramatic aptitude. Nude scenes, however, would prove far less than comfortable in her subsequent films.

ANIMAL INSTINCTS II (1993) billed Sandifer with the "Empress of the Erotic Thriller," Shannon Whirry (FF 3:2). But her recollections of the film are tainted with regret. "It was my biggest nightmare. The love scenes were not love scenes, but rather sex scenes. What was merely an uncomplicated page in the script turned into ten minutes of eroticism."

The experience eroded Sandifer's self-esteem. Admitting she felt exploited, the actress acknowledges the production's only redemptive asset: "Shannon was really nice and sympathetic to the way I felt. She also taught me how to protect myself with my next contract, so this wouldn't happen again."

Indeed, the Whirry movie proved a learning experience; Sandifer developed a resolve to ditch her naivete. She approved a wonderful little role in an Andrew Stevens film titled INNOCENT DREAMS. "Andrew originally offered me a bigger role, which required nudity and love scenes," explains Sandifer. "At this point, I had stopped doing that because I was sick of it. So Andrew graciously offered me the smaller role, which was great." Usually a somber presence on film,

ELIZABETH SANDIFER

"It was a nightmare. The love scenes were not love scenes, but sex scenes. An uncomplicated page in the script turned into 10 minutes of eroticism."



"SEXUAL OUTLAW was a way of expressing my concept of sensuality. It was a good love story, but sex-for-sex scenes are not fulfilling to me as an actress."

Stevens turned out to be a prankster who cracked up the cast and crew with his behind-the-scenes comedy relief. "You would forget he was the director," smiles Sandifer, "since you had such fun playing around between takes."

Adhering to the erotic thriller genre, Sandifer was cast in SEDUCE ME: THE PAMELA PRINCIPAL II. Kim Haun, the film's director of photography, drove Sandifer to tears. "The director, Ed Holtzman, tried to keep Kim and I separated," she grins, "because we kept laughing and were having such a good time. It got so out of hand that Ed would actually make me leave the set. What's really great, though, is that the three of us are still friends." Cast as the lead's best friend, Sandifer was not obligated to participate in the T&A scenes.

By the time she signed on for INDECENT BEHAVIOR (1993), Sandifer enjoyed a complete restoration of her self-confidence. Her re-

newed chutzpa was embodied in the screen character, a tough, streetwise chick who demands nothing less than full control. It was a complete polarization from the role written for Shannon Tweed, the film's star and rival for Shannon Whirry's "steam queen" sovereignty. One scene required Sandifer, whose character launches a blackmail scheme, to break into Tweed's apartment. "Shannon is really tall and she's barefoot," relates Sandifer. "I'm 5'8" and I'm wearing heels. It was funny, what with me trying to intimidate this woman. Here I am threatening her, trying to literally get in her face, even though she is much taller."

P.M. Entertainment's GAMES prompted a reunion with director Ed Holtzman. Sandifer was cast as "the soon-to-be-ex-wife of a detective who's having major problems in his life because he has visions. He's psychotic." Deflecting a glamorous image, Sandifer's character was

"quite pregnant. I had a chance to play pregnant, with a big tummy, so it was fun."

Reflecting back on her film career, I addressed Sandifer with questions regarding erotic thrillers and the inherently graphic love-making scenes. Her response is emotionally fused. "I won't do full frontal nudity, and I won't do nudity in B-films anymore. I've done some topless scenes that seemed okay at the time, but I regret them now. It was because I was intimidated by the filmmakers at a young age. You can be sexy without taking your clothes off. In fact, that's the most sexy—the illusion of sexuality, not the graphic display. I like watching romance on the screen. If that romance happens to be sexual, it should manifest itself in a passionate, beautiful way. Not something exploitative or violent."

Sandifer is also steamed with female luminaries who hypocritically decry the deficiency of women's roles. "I think it's a little two-faced. So many women say it's biased. Yet, these women who do make it in this business don't always lend the hand-up to other women. They need to form production companies, find women screenwriters, and scripts with strong, interesting female characters—not bimbos. Being in that position would be my idea of heaven. There are too many powerful women who are not making enough of a change."

The girl from Jacksonville has grown up; she's not only in pursuit of substantive roles, but determined to change Hollywood politics. It'll be a rough road ahead, breaking her link with erotic thrillers. But I'd bet that Sandifer will be a likely heir to the power play that has been wasted or abused by Tinseltown's so-called suffragettes and activists. Who knows, maybe she'll be giving the hand-up to the next naive girl who's fresh off the bus. □

HARD BOUNTY

WIN ONE OF FIVE CRYPTS PERSONALLY AUTOGRAPHED BY STAR KELLY LEBROCK

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LINNEA QUIGLEY

continued from page 27

"A year later, I co-produced THE GIRL I WANT. It's a cute film with a premise that's similar to GREASE. Lar Keitan plays a nerdy girl who wants to meet a jock, and her friends help her to become cool-looking. Burt Ward plays the father who thinks his son is a homosexual. It's pretty funny."

Though intent on graduating to projects of expanded scale, Quigley has adamantly declined to compromise the Hollywood mainstream. "I want to stay within the cultish-type movies," she insists. "It's not like I want to do a DUMB AND DUMBER or something like that." Matter of fact, her favorite films—TRUE ROMANCE, WILD AT HEART, KALIFORNIA—are decidedly anti-Hollywood, and the type of auteur territory that Quigley would prefer to guide her own career. She's so sick of TimesTown that Quigley is pondering a move to Florida, the site of her latest film, JACK-O-LANTERN.

The phone rings and Quigley engages in an amicable conversation. After she hangs up the phone, I surmise that Quigley's proposed move to the east coast may be a bit premature. Turns out she was negotiating with the producers of *DELA VIEW*, an anthology series (see page 5), to serve as a creative consultant and occasional director. "It's been my ambition to direct independent projects," smiles Quigley, whose goal was encouraged by JACK-O-LANTERN director Steve Lashaw. "I always wanted to do a documentary about animal abuse, but, ironically, I wanted to start out with some short films—satyr-type things."

She also tells me that tomorrow morning she'll be photographed by *Yes West*. "It's a magazine devoted entirely to writers. They want me to pose a la Mariene Dietrich." Quigley musters a triumphant laugh. Somehow, I suspect her cheeks are overreacting in the eyes of critics who passed a pessimistic prognosis on her future.

The phone rings again, this time in regard to "The Sex Symbol Dynasty," a merchandising company developed by Quigley, Julie Strain, Rhonda Shear and Monique Gabrielle. I wave goodbye and exit to a chorus of barking dogs. Switching on the car radio, I catch the tail end of some gos-

sip about the latest Aaron Spelling starlet. Aah, Hollywood's dysfunctional family, seems only yesterday that Shannon Doherty and a couple of honeys who "retired" from BAYWATCH were pitched as negotiators, repets with press agents and recurrent media exposure. It's debatable whether or not their 15 minutes is up. But Linnea Quigley isn't looking at the clock. She just keeps on taking. □

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REBECCA WICKS

continued from page 4

a preview that's shown at SIKINI DRIVE-IN, Fred Olen Ray's 1994 comedy," recalls Wicks. "Ray needed a phony trailer for the drive-in scene. So Steve Lashaw shot a three-minute coming attraction called GATOR BABES. I starred as the Gator Queen and four other actresses were cast as my Gator Babes. We're a group of renegade females in search of a jeweled gator, and we worship this sentinel who's half-man, half-gator. But we're competing with pirates for the treasure. No problem, kill 'em and rape 'em. I mean, we rape them first and then kill them. My tag line in the short was 'I am the Gator Queen, I won't be denied.' Anyway, Steve has decided to expand this movie into a feature-length movie. It's going into production in May and we'll be shooting in the swamps. It's likely I'll reprise my trailer role as the Gator Queen."

Next thing you know, the photographer and director converge on Wicks for her modeling and acting services. I only have time to fire-off one more question, and the first thing that comes to mind is a shameless cliché: "Rebecca, what are your goals?" Wicks fiddles with her robe, there's a pause and she looks absolutely regal—like she's about to slip into *Harlequin* (though I doubt, these days, Wicks would be interested in playing his author) "What I love doing," she beams, "is making other people feel emotions. Someone spotted me at a grocery store and complimented me on my performance as Trudy in *Steel Magnolias*, so I

think I communicated something mutually healing." She pauses again. "But you've also got to survive in this business, so I'd love to do an inspirational comedy-drama which would turn out to be no profitable that it would be turned into a weekly series and I would star and direct. I'd do it, you know?"

What did I tell you? Rebecca Wicks won't be denied. □

LETTERS

continued from page 4

[As aforementioned in the past issue, and the facing page, we've been flooded with inquiries regarding 60 FOGG CENTERFOLD. First, you may write J.J. North of P.O. Box 344, Jackson, New Jersey—08527. Mr. North, incidentally, will be profiled next issue; illustrations will include our outtake file from the movie. Regarding the remainder of your questions, here's the latest from CENTERFOLD director, Fred Olen Ray. "You'd think we would want Michelle Bauer's test footage? No way. Her scenes as the 'posse' will appear in SIKINI DRIVE-IN, which will be released direct-to-video this summer. In the next that Image Laser Entertainment wants me to expand the running time of CENTERFOLD, I'll include Michelle Bauer's test footage on the laser release. Expect CENTERFOLD to surface on video shelves by early summer (June or July); the laser edition will debut a couple of months later."]

DIANE LANE

continued from page 4

understood on first impressions. People always think I'm tough, hard and cold until they get to know me, and Danny's the same way. I don't know where his energy comes from. No matter how tired he is, Danny will go for takes after take after take until he gets what he wants. I'm bappy with that. Nothing I've ever done before has prepared me for JUDGE DREDD, and my only hope is I can tell what my character is all about, as well as possible."

A couple of months later Lane returned to more familiar terrain. Moving from sci-fi comics to the steady, brooding psyche of Tennessee Williams, she's co-starring with Jessica Lange in CBS's A STREET-CAR NAMED DESIRE. Diane Lane will perform—effortlessly, no doubt—as well as possible. □

NOBLE HENRI

entirement from page 58
and *Femmes Fatales*. All others are like bad children's cereal—questionable ingredients and no substance.

What's next after *VIRTUAL DESIRES*?

I am in talks with Universal to realize a Hitchcock follow-up, *MARNIE II: THE AWAKENING*.

Sounds great. Any idea who'll play the title role of *Marnie* in your sequel?

I have set my eye on a lovely girl and fine actress, Antonia Dorian. Those eyes...those lips...so expressive. But Universal has had say I hate bureaucracy, it's so American.

Politely excusing himself, Noble Henri returned to the set. Louisa McComas, a new-comer whom the director discovered through the pages of this magazine, smiles wistfully and launches into a slow, sensuous striptease in front of the hot lights. As Henri would say—"C'est magnifique!"

LARA PARKER

things have to happen or people get bored. I had to develop an awareness of that, and I still don't think I have it all down. But I've really enjoyed it.

Are any acting roles imminent?

My agents were hit very hard by the earthquake, and I haven't heard from them! I think the building was damaged, and everybody's pictures, tapes and resumes were lost! I know that this is distressing to the fans, but I don't have much interest in acting anymore. There are very few roles, it's very competitive; it's very hard to even get an audition. It starts not to make sense to keep beating your head against the wall. But, at some point, I might do something.

FEMMES ON FILM

Concluded the AFM with the annual Mars Bruder Bash. Bruder, known for his voluminous video bar, customarily throws a raging soiree complete with two bands and all the food and freerater you can handle. Among the celebs were *FF* staffers Ari Bass and Larry Greenberg, actress Margot Hope, exhibitionist Tanny Parks and

these wanna-be producers soliciting every accessible wanna-be starlet. My favorite scene of the evening was the aspiring actress who blithely asked every single male, "Are you a producer?" An affirmative response pushed her flirtation button, a truthful denial turned her as cold as the beer on tap. You gotta love superficiality, it's so inherently Hollywood as boob jobs and drug addiction. □

CYNTHIA ROTHROCK

"I don't know what the problem is," she sighs. "I know that if I could get a theatrical part, that the audience would see it. I think seeing a woman do this up on the big screen would impress a lot of people I have a lot of fans. My movies are always on cable. Why I can't get backing on a feature is puzzling to me. I just can't figure it out."

Fosing for photographer Tom Vollick, sans her trademark leather togs, Rothrock effectively deflected the "tomboy" facade. "Doing the *Femmes Fatales* shoot was an opportunity to change my image a little," says Rothrock. "I think people always think of me as the tough, fighting girl. Usually, the movies I do don't show me in a sexy light." I remind Rothrock that *FAST GETAWAY II* exempted her from "the image", though no less feisty, her femme fatale was uncharacteristically clad in very high skirts and an assortment of black or white stockings. "That's the only one," she points out. "I did this *FF* spread because I thought it was time for a change. It's the first time I took pictures like that. Tom just said, 'Do anything, however you feel comfortable.' As we did it a little longer, I started feeling a little more comfortable. The test session was a really quick shoot, like about two hours."

And it's two hours that could make a turning point in her career. You make the call, can Cynthia Rothrock turn from grinder to glamour? Doesn't appear much of a challenge to me. Of course, if you disagree—and you misinterpret her steazy alter ego, debuted in these pages, as a sign of vulnerability—I suggest you tell her. To her face. □

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AFM 1995: JULIE STRAIN AND STONE-AGE KUNG-FU

BY TINA DESIRÉE BERG

Traditionally, the American Film Market is abbreviated to AFM, however, several other acronyms have been linked to the initials. My favorites are the American Fish Market and Awful F— Movies. It's a Tinseltown ritual: genuine and pseudo-film vendors screen their B-product at the L.A. conclave to generate foreign and domestic sales. This year proved to be no different, though some of the films turned out to be pretty damn good.

While deflecting the "Baby, I can make you a star" bullshit from some clowns in the lobby, I chatted with the attendant *foxes* *fatales*: Theresa Russell, whose insistence on non-commercial films (EUREKA!, ARIA, WHORE) has turned her into a Hollywood zealot. Also present was Cynthia Rothrock, transformed from kickboxer to bombshell, and Asian actress Tiana who evolved from CATCH THE HEAT provocateur to pivotal player in Oliver Stone's award-winning FROM HANOI TO HOLLYWOOD.

Julie Strain movies were all over the place; we're talkin' two dozen. I mean, I turn around to blow my nose and there's Julie—wearing a siren-sque red dress accessorized with a pistol—planted on a LETHAL BETRAYAL poster. I think the only recent film that didn't contrive a Julie Strain appearance was last year's remake of A MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET (sage career choice, Julie). Later, I bump into Lisa Comshaw, who may be heir to Strain's "Erotic Empress" mantle. She was promoting OBSESSION KILLS, the 314th film at the Market to include "Obsession" in the title. Runner-up (i.e. words most often cited in film titles): Naked, Sins, Baby, Secret, Desire, Heat.

Stumbled across fellow FF staffer Gary Garfinkel, who was surveying films for Showtime and Joe Bob Briggs. We exchange notes on the latest scandals, but unfortunately, Gary's gossip is unprintable. He did tip me that a couple of scantily-clad women were hanging around the lobby. My God, the lobby—where sheep (save ingests) are meat-inspected, cattle call-style, by hungry wolves (agents doing their producer/casting agent impersonations). I was determined to be a den mother and caution starlets that



Actress star Kathy Long (l.a.a. "Queen of the Kickboxes") and actress/FF staffer Tina Desirée Berg conspire to kick "meat inspectors" (phony producers) butt in the lobby.

reaming the lobby, sans chaperone, as akin to crossing the portal to Room 217 (this in-joke won't be lost on Stephen King addicts). I rushed to the foyer and, sure enough, there's a couple of barefoot, bikini-clad "cave babes" banging around to promote David Heavener's JURASSIC WOMEN (I have it on good authority that nobody in the cast of Spielberg's 1993 epic will be reprising their roles in this one, which has something to do with prehistoric vikings practicing martial arts on another planet). I alerted both women to the perils of duplicitous producer/agent dung, but nearly slipped in it myself when somebody in a cheap suit addressed me with, "Excuse me, you must be an actress. I've seen your picture around and..." I declined his calling card, beat a path upstairs and observed that somehow—within a 10-minute time frame—the amount of Julie Strain movies on exhibit had mystically increased from two to about five dozen.

Notes from the Market:

This thing about uniting the Stone Age with martial arts seems to be a trend. FUTURE WAR matched dinosaurs against Daniel Bernhardt, who recently replaced Jean-Claude Van Damme as the star of BLOODSPORT II. The movie was a hoist—check it out.

Had a cup of java with Ruzdretsch/actress Kelly Brook. We had not seen each other since doing a low-budget horror called THE HAUNT. Kelly opens with, "You look even better now than when we got together on the set." Yeah, let's hope so...that last time we got together I was

playing a corpse.

Producer James Dudelson related his FIRST LOVE series—all about sirens performing in romantically compromising positions—will debut this season on Showtime, right after THE RED SHOE DIARIES. Dudelson also revealed that he's starting production on CREEPSHOW, a series loosely based on the Stephen King movie.

Checked-out the Concorde exhibit aka The J.J. North Theme Park. As a pitch for ATTACK OF THE 60 FOOT CENTERFOLD, the joint was wallpapered with copies of J.J.'s *Female Fatale* front cover (39); we're talkin' in the hundreds! The same issue's front cover was also printed—quadruplicate—in the movie's glossy promotional brochure. Kinds nice to be linked with a Roger Corman/Fred Olen Ray pic that insiders are predicting will blow the roof off video sales/rentals, even exceeding the company's top-grossing CAENOSAUR. I spotted the name of John Waters veteran/Cinemacube editor George Slueter on the poster credits. Called him up at his Baltimore residence to tell him about the killing, and he seemed equally certain of the film's megasuccess. "Can you negotiate a role for me in the sequel?" he asked. You betcha, George. And—this time—I'll be sure they throw in a Rolls. CENTERFOLD, incidentally, will probably be commemorated as Michelle Bauer's own song. I heard that Michelle, a genuine talent whose blistering luster and comic peniche is the stuff B-legends are made of, is serious about abandoning film to raise her family. Well miss you, kid.

Met with kickboxers Kathy Long and Richard Norian, both schmoozing to promote their collaborative actioner. After rapping with them for a few minutes, it dawned on me that I was the ring girl for the World Champion Kickboxing Fights, officiated at Caesar's Palace, the same year that Kathy won the title. Impact editor Rey Logan, who joins us for some hot chocolate, notes that Kathy served as Michelle Pfeiffer's stunt double in BATMAN RETURNS. All fine and dandy, but the sexy scrapper was present to push THE STRANGER, her remake of HIGH PLAINS DRIFTER. Along with her aptitude for slinking karate chops, Kathy—like her sister in siege, Cynthia Rothrock—can also drop some seriously steamy peeps. She'll prove it in a forthcoming issue.

continued on page 87



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